

Gates-gate:  
an open and  
closed case

Page 4

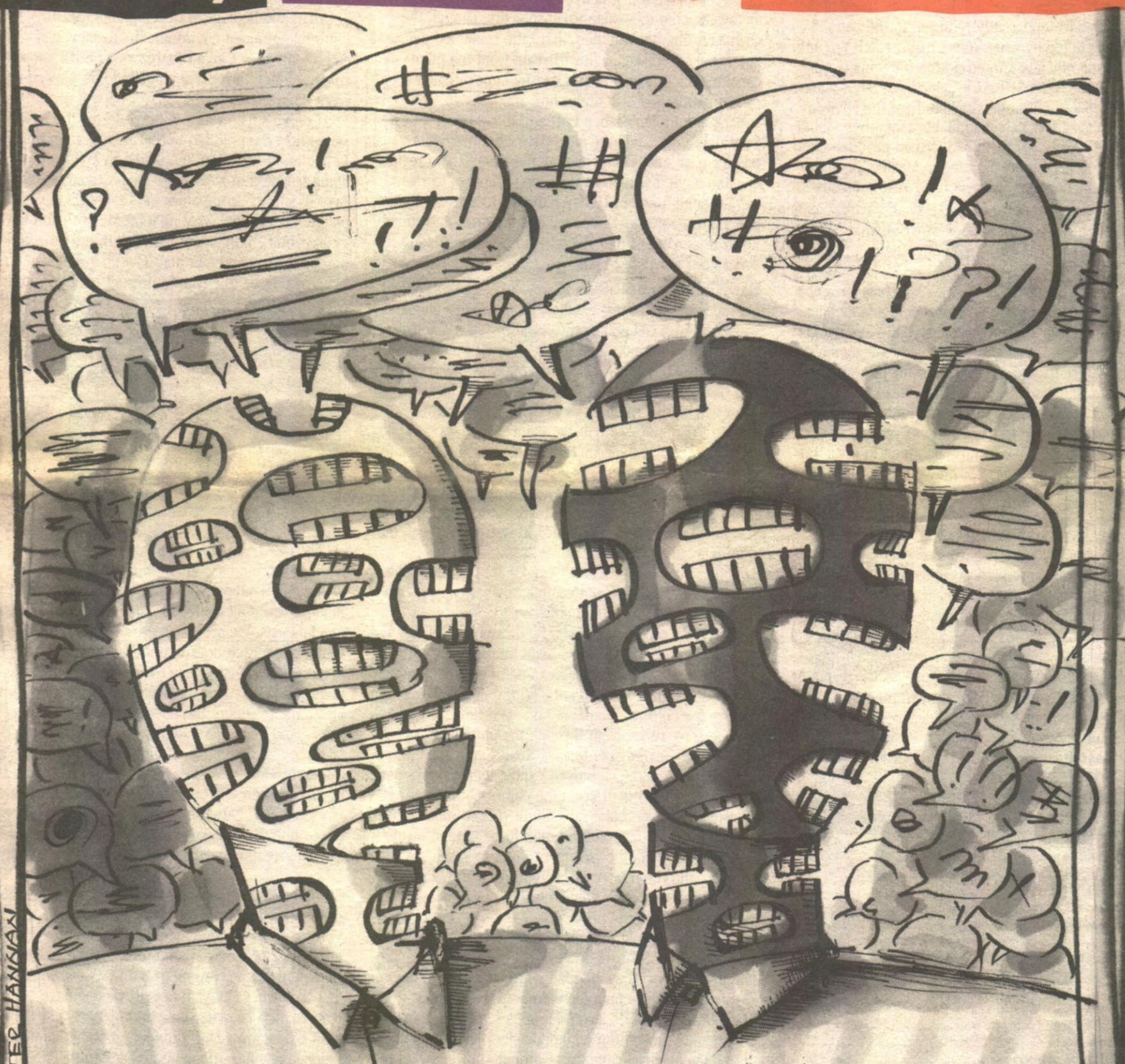
# IN THESE TIMES

VOL. 15, NO. 24

MAY 22-28, 1991

\$2.00

## RACE, CLASS and CANDOR



A taboo-breaking debate  
is obscuring the issues and  
fueling antagonism between blacks and whites.

Salim Muwakkil, page 12



# The toxic price of free trade in Mexico

By William K. Burke

Powerful U.S. corporations seem poised to exploit the pending U.S.-Mexico free-trade agreement to intensify the export of deadly environmental practices they can't employ at home. During the last decade, citizen pressure and federal regulation have forced many U.S. manufacturers to learn to recycle their toxic waste and even replace some of the chemicals they use with harmless substitutes. But at the same time, hundreds of U.S.-owned factories have opened across the U.S.-Mexican border.

Freed from U.S. environmental restrictions, many of these corporations have apparently returned to the bad old days of toxic dumping when rivers might catch fire and environmental officials uttered no discouraging words.

On May 9 the National Toxics Campaign (NTC) released *Border Trouble*, the first detailed study of the environmental effects of Mexico's maquiladora factories. About 1,800 maquiladoras, primarily U.S.-owned product-assembly plants, are currently operating in Mexico along the U.S. border. Maquiladora owners have long been suspected of taking advantage of lax Mexican environmental law enforcement to dump toxic waste. But what NTC researchers found was far worse than anything they expected.

"We're fearful that the U.S.-Mexican border is already a 2,000-mile Love Canal," says NTC president and founder John O'Connor. Out of 23 samples taken, 17 were found to contain significant discharges of toxic waste. Eight sites contained severe toxic discharges, in some cases exceeding U.S. pollution standards by hundreds of times.

O'Connor worries that if Congress grants the Bush administration's wish to "fast track" a free-trade agreement between the U.S. and Mexico, the pollution in these border regions will worsen (see *In These Times*, April 17). "U.S. corporations have a double standard," O'Connor says. "When General Motors (GM) and Ford move across the border they have a different set of standards on the shop floor." As a result of these negligent practices, rivers, streams and canals have been poisoned from Tijuana, near the Pacific Ocean, to Matamoros, near the Gulf of Mexico.

**Gulf of Tonka:** NTC researchers found that a sewer line near a factory owned by the Tonka corporation was pouring raw sewage mixed with nearly 9 percent petroleum into the Tijuana River. In Nogales, the discharge pipe next to a U.S.-owned musical-instruments factory spews a bright orange-red stream loaded with the toxic heavy metals chromium and copper. Beside Ford's Lamosa plant in Nuevo Laredo, the Toxics Campaign

found xylene—a common solvent used to clean machinery that has been found to cause kidney, lung and liver damage and internal bleeding—at levels 20 times greater than allowed in U.S. drinking water. One of the most toxic discharge samples was taken from GM's Rimir automobile-trim plant in Matamoros, where the waste contained nearly 2,800 parts per million xylene. (U.S. standards typically allow plants to discharge up to 10 parts per million.)

The NTC investigators were not given plant layouts and were not allowed on maquiladora grounds. As a result, the investigators were forced to estimate the sources of their samples by tracing discharge pipes back to their origins. Anonymous maquiladora workers helped pinpoint some of the toxic-waste sources. Marco Kaltofen, director of the NTC's Citizen's Environmental Laboratory, was also able to "fingerprint" combinations of various pollutants. The pipe leading from the Rimir plant, for example, spilled a distinctive ratio of xylene, acetone and methylene chloride—also toxic solvents. Though the chemicals had been diluted, that ratio remained constant in a canal several miles downstream from the plant—a canal in which residents of a nearby impoverished Mexican neighborhood fish and swim.

Back in Kaltofen's lab, a bottle of thick, black water from the Rimir discharge pipe gives off a heavy chemical odor. Similar smells hang over all the maquiladora regions day and night, Kaltofen says. Toxic Campaign workers were rotated home in 10-day intervals to prevent illness. But the residents who live near the factories and spend up to 10 percent of their income on bottled drinking water have nowhere to go.

**Patricia and me:** Patricia Molloy, a GM spokeswoman, questions the NTC's test results. "There are just gargantuan variances" with GM pollution tests, she says. A GM test done in early 1990, around the same time the NTC samples were taken, showed the plant discharging only .56 parts per million of xylene. When asked whether plant managers who knew when GM's samples were to be taken might have chosen to temporarily halt the plant's dirtiest operations, Molloy replied, "I think that ascribes certain motives to us that the people at the plant would disagree with."

"It's not unusual to see this kind of difference between samples taken during surprise inspections and those from scheduled self-monitoring," adds Kaltofen. "It's been our experience that when announced sampling takes place, pollution-intensive processes simply are not operating. This is just one dramatic example of what happens when you let the fox guard the henhouse."

The NTC's report includes a Rimir employee's description of plant operations. "We paint automobile bumpers," says the report in part. "To clean paint guns and paint lines we use chemical solvents. With great frequency we change the color of the paint, and each time we make a change ... we run solvent through the paint guns and lines. We point the paint guns toward the drain in the floor."

Molloy claims the employee's statement is misleading. "The fact is that the drain in the paint booth never led [outside the plant]," she says. Rimir procedures call for the solvent and paint-laden runoff to be treated inside the plant. Sludge from the treatment process is sent back to the U.S., and the treated water—until recently dumped in the canal—is now recycled within the plant. Molloy questions the authenticity of the NTC's findings, noting that no lab reports or proof that the sample came from Rimir accompanied the NTC report.

Kaltofen says he would gladly furnish GM with documents tracing the chain of custody of the samples from Mexico to his lab. He also offered to send GM his own lab reports and those from an independent laboratory that tested the Mexican samples—without knowing what they were—in order to verify his own results. Kaltofen grants that he had little information about the internal workings of the Rimir plant, but he insists his data contradicts GM's claims that it treats the toxic wastes.

Kaltofen admits the NTC study is limited in scope. "This was not an exhaustive study," he says. "We were just opening the door and taking a look at how [U.S.] companies are behaving in Mexico." But despite the limitations, Kaltofen was shocked by his own results. "We didn't see 10 percent more pollution [than in the U.S.], but thousands of times more pollution from similar factories with similar numbers of employees. These are not massive factories. These are little white buildings, like you

would see in an American town's industrial park, discharging massive amounts of pollution. Chemicals that are going to target every organ in the human body are being released in amounts great enough to catch fire."

**Petroleum peddlers:** Maquiladoras are dumping enough chemicals, petroleum and toxic heavy metals to be accused not just of polluting air and water but of wasting money by not making full use of expensive raw materials. "It's bad business to have sewers flowing with nearly 10 percent petroleum," O'Connor says. "You wouldn't find this stuff at Love Canal. At least not in these amounts. Firms that prevent pollution have learned it's a good long-term investment, both in reducing liability and reducing input costs."

O'Connor has called for U.S. insistence that Mexico recognize and promote pollution prevention in all mutual economic development plans. Mexico already has environmental standards to protect its waterways, but the Office of Urban and Ecological Development (SEDUE), the nation's underfunded environmental agency, cannot afford to enforce them. In Ciudad Juarez, one SEDUE inspector is in charge of monitoring 300 maquiladoras, as well as the city's domestic factories.

O'Connor's list of four policy reforms the NTC believes would help the polluted border includes: putting an end to the double standard employed by U.S. corporations doing business in Mexico; giving Mexican citizens the right to sue U.S. companies in U.S. courts in order to force pollution cleanups; creating joint Mexican and U.S. environmental enforcement teams with full jurisdiction over border regions and multinational operations; and making U.S. firms agree to clean up present pollution in the bor-

## INSIDE STORY

der regions before a free-trade agreement with Mexico is signed.

"The free-trade agreement should be the economic hammer" to increase environmental enforcement, says O'Connor. "Trade is between corporations, but in the modern world all trade must include social and environmental costs. We are for free trade, but it must be fair trade—trade that doesn't pollute water."

But George Bush doesn't want his free-trade agreement bogged down by any specific environmental reforms. Instead, the president has suggested that environmental issues could be negotiated in side agreements after free trade begins. The Bush administration has pledged to continue present levels of environmental protection along the border—hardly a promising vow—and to "provide for consultations" between the U.S. and Mexico on possible imposition of stricter standards on hazardous-waste handling and treatment. "It's the old 'trust us' mentality," says Lewis.

International environmental treaties that operate independently of trade agreements don't work, adds O'Connor. The 1983 La Paz Agreement already requires U.S. firms operating in Mexico to ship their toxic waste home for treatment. But according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), those provisions have been widely ignored. EPA records show that in 1988, less than 1 percent of U.S. firms with production plants in Mexico shipped any hazardous waste back to the U.S.

The most troubling point made in *Border Trouble* is that pollution in the border regions isn't limited to isolated toxic dumps or specific neighborhoods. "We didn't visit toxic-waste sites," says Kaltofen. "These were city streets and backyards—this is everyday life."

A recent University of Texas study found heightened levels of liver and gall-bladder cancers in the 33 counties that line the Rio Grande. If Bush gets his version of free trade between the U.S. and Mexico, this systematic poisoning of an entire region—in defiance of economic and environmental logic—could prove impossible to stop.

William K. Burke writes regularly on environmental issues for *In These Times*.

## CONTENTS

Inside Story: A free-trade dump for Mexico .....	2
Shots in the dark for gun control .....	3
The First Stone/In Person .....	4
In Short .....	6
Bankrupting education .....	7
A choice combination for school reform .....	8
Can the Soviet Union hang together? .....	11
On race and recognition .....	12
Editorial .....	14
Letters/Sylvia .....	15
Viewpoint: The rights of humanity .....	16
Ashes & Diamonds by Alexander Cockburn .....	17
In Print: Big Bukowski biography .....	18
The hustlers and the hustled .....	18
Canadian labor gem .....	19
C.L.R. James buffs keep in touch .....	19
In the Arts: Marx: The Video .....	20
Lightning strikes Johnny Thunders .....	21
Classifieds .....	23
Ecologically correct .....	24

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright ©1991 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 15, No. 24) published May 22, 1991, for newsstand sales May 22-28, 1991.





FOR OUR NEXT ACT...

By John Canham-Clyne

WASHINGTON, D.C.

**T**HE STATISTICS ALONE SPEAK VOLUMES ABOUT how violent our society has grown in recent decades. More than 30,000 Americans are shot to death each year. Homicide is the leading cause of death among young African-American men. And 12,000 suicides are committed with handguns each year. Clearly, the word "crisis" no longer even applies—the country has reached a violent stasis that will take herculean efforts to arrest.

How has Congress attempted to mitigate this situation? The House of Representatives on May 8 passed the most tepid imaginable gun-control measure short of no bill at all—the so-called "Brady bill."

Named for former Reagan press secretary James Brady, who was wounded by John Hinckley in the 1981 assassination attempt against the former president, the measure mandates a seven-day waiting period prior to the purchase of a handgun. No one on any side of the vitriolic gun-control debate believes the Brady bill will prevent more than a few dozen of the thousands of annual shootings in the U.S.

The Brady bill requires neither a permit for a gun nor a background check on potential purchasers. Its supporters insist that a seven-day wait will give local and state officials time to find out whether the customer has a criminal record, history of mental illness or any other history rendering the purchaser unfit to own a gun. The bill does not mandate that check, however, nor does it authorize any funds to assist state and local law enforcement. Those agencies, already swamped by the war on drugs, will now have to devote scarce resources to

## Gun-control bills shoot blanks at U.S. violence

background checks.

**A shot in the dark:** Supporters of the Brady bill admit it will have little effect on violence, but they are nevertheless jubilant at its passage. It seems strange that elected officials would pour so much emotion and effort into legislation with so little effect on the problems it is intended to remedy. The difference between the emotion and the actual legislation can be summed up in three letters: NRA. The National Rifle Association has turned the Brady bill into a litmus test of support for the right to personal possession of firearms, and the House action is being read as a turning point in the politics of guns.

Moments before passing the Brady bill, the House voted down legislation offered by Rep. Harley Staggers Jr. (D-WV) and backed by the NRA. The Staggers bill called for the establishment of a national hotline linked to a computer database, enabling gun dealers to get an instantaneous check on their customers' backgrounds. In theory, the Staggers bill would be a stronger check on violent crime as it would force dealers to check records, whereas the Brady bill only allows time to make the check.

But such an instantaneous check is several years and hundreds of millions of dollars away. Worse, the Staggers bill relies too heavily on technology. If a dealer were unable to reach the hotline within 24 hours, the sale would go through.

The Staggers bill is also somewhat redundant in its proposals. Under the 1988 Crime Control Act, the Justice Department is supposed to be already hard at work centralizing federal crime records to create a national background-check network. (The defeated bill did authorize funding for the hotline.)

The Staggers bill was offered on the House floor as "an amendment in the form of a substitute." Had it passed, it would have replaced the Brady bill entirely. This offered the chance for headlines reading "NRA defeated" or "NRA wins," depending on the outcome. But, as usual, House rules and eagerness for a dramatic showdown left the public ill-served. Rather than opposites, the two bills seem logical complements to one another.

**Even if a mandatory background check were married with the seven-day waiting period, few believe it would cause a significant reduction in the level of American violence.**

**Nothing to cheer about:** Mike Beard, president of the Washington, D.C.-based Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, hopes the Senate will combine provisions in the two bills to form a solid first step toward his group's ultimate goal of banning handgun manufacture, sale and possession. "We have argued long and hard that the Brady bill ought to include a mandatory background check and provisions for financing it," he says. As it stands, the Brady bill would "sunset"—or be superseded by—the institution of a national point-of-sale network for checking backgrounds.

Even if a mandatory background check were married with the seven-day waiting period, few believe that it would cause a significant reduction in the level of American violence. Freshman Rep. Peter Peterson (D-FL) says he voted against both bills because of their ineffectuality. Suzanne Farmer, administrative assistant for Peterson, adds that he wants to see a national registration and permit system. She points out that the Brady bill would not even apply to Florida because the state gun laws are already tougher than those proposed by Brady. "He [Peterson] worries about the crime and not the commerce," says Farmer. Peterson believes any crime bill considered by Congress should have a comprehensive gun-control provision.

Another freshman representative, socialist Bernie Sanders of Vermont, voted for Staggers. Given the NRA's image as a bastion of conservatism, his vote seemed incongruous. Not so, according to Sanders staffer Doug Boucher. "This is a position Bernie's held for a long time—in fact, he ran on it in his campaign," Boucher says. "He feels Brady's not going to have any effect on crime."

Sanders believes the root causes of crime

Continued on page 10

IN THESE TIMES MAY 22-28, 1991 3



By Joel Bleifuss

**Bush's Gates**

The only argument that can be made to support George Bush's appointment of Robert Gates as director of the Central Intelligence Agency is that he is the president's choice.

A close examination of Gates' career indicates that it was not deeds alone that led to his precipitous rise to power. (See "The First Stone," April 10). There are three reasons why the Senate should reject Gates' nomination.

**Bureaucratic climber:** In his 26 years of service with the CIA, Gate's most demonstrable skill has been his ability to further his own career.

Gates joined the CIA in 1966 at the age of 23. In 1974 he was brought onto President Gerald Ford's National Security Council (NSC) by then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. It was there that Gates earned his reputation as a "workaholic" and hooked up with his current coterie: then-Chief of Staff Dick Cheney, who is now secretary of defense; then-and-current National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft; then-CIA Director George Bush; and then-CIA station chief in Seoul, South Korea, Donald Gregg—the man who was allegedly in charge of the CIA's Korea-gate damage control.

Gates continued at the NSC under Jimmy Carter, and in 1979 moved on to become the executive assistant to CIA Director Stansfield Turner. What Gates did during his NSC tenure from 1974 to 1979 is not publicly known.

In 1981, Gate's career took off under the tutelage of CIA Director William Casey, whom the *Washington Post* described as having "an almost paternal attitude toward Gates." During the first year of the Reagan administration, Gates served as Casey's executive secretary.

Casey promoted Gates in 1982, following the resignation of Bruce Clark, deputy director of intelligence. Clark left the agency after Casey rejected his appraisal of the Soviet Union's involvement in international terrorism as too modest. Instead, Casey and Secretary of State Alexander Haig supported a more agreeable study by a lower-level CIA official that had posited: "The Soviets are deeply engaged in support of revolutionary violence which is the fundamental element of Leninist ideology. Such violence frequently entails acts of international terrorism." The Sovietologist who authored this politically more palatable study is not known. But it is known that hardline Sovietologist Gates soon took over Clark's old job.

In March 1976, CIA Deputy Director John McMahon, the second in command at the agency, resigned. McMahon was particularly upset by the escalation of covert paramilitary operations in Afghanistan and Nicaragua. He also was distressed upon hearing, after the fact, of the CIA's involvement in an Israeli-Iranian November 1985 arms deal involving U.S. manufactured Hawk missiles.

At the time of McMahon's resignation, which was six months before the Iran-contra scandal broke, the *Washington Post* reported: "To many both in and outside the CIA, [McMahon] has become the agency's conscience, seeking to protect it from the kind of controversial activities and 'dirty tricks' that led in the mid-'70s to scandal, public criticism and painful congressional investigations. [However] McMahon's stand against expanding CIA paramilitary activities because of what he regarded as a long-term threat to the agency's traditional functions of intelligence collection and analysis earned him the ire of conservative political-action groups, which launched a campaign last October [1985] to have him ousted."

The *Post* further reported, "The departure of McMahon ... clears the way for a more activist policy of CIA intervention that the agency's director, William J. Casey, has been promoting." The same day that McMahon resigned, Gates was appointed by Casey to take his place.

A CIA veteran who requested anonymity told me that McMahon—unlike Gates—commanded respect among those who worked for him. He also said some agency operatives believe that Gates played a role in McMahon's "resignation."

Charles Hayes of Nancy, Ky., is a former officer of the CIA's "operations" section. He says of Gates, "He's a kind of guy who is very political. In my personal opinion, Gates would go political any which way he can to satisfy the powers that be. He has a bad habit of looking the other way—in other words, he knows what's coming along; he just doesn't want to know."

In recent years, press reports have included the following quotes from Gates' critics within the intelligence community. He is variously described as: a "modern American apparatchik," a

**Audrey McLaughlin: new politicker**

By Ruth Latta

When Audrey McLaughlin, the leader of Canada's New Democratic Party (NDP), visits her home riding in the Yukon, she travels to a constituency office known as the "log skyscraper," a structure taller than the surrounding buildings because it is made of two log cabins put together. This modest, homey office is appropriate for a leader who rose from the grass roots to head a party that prides itself on representing and keeping in touch with "ordinary Canadians."

Elected leader of the NDP last December, McLaughlin is the first woman ever to lead a major federal party in Canada. The NDP, with its pro-choice stand on abortion and its support for pay equity and social-security measures such as universal medical care, old-age pensions, unemployment insurance and publicly funded child care, sees the

election of McLaughlin as symbolic of its efforts on behalf of women and other disadvantaged groups.

First elected to the House of Commons in 1987 in a Yukon by-election, McLaughlin attained the party leadership after a relatively short time as an elected representative. "When people used to say I had no experience in politics, I would tell them that they just didn't understand what 'politics' means," McLaughlin said in an interview in December 1990. "I've worked with peace coalitions, environmental groups, women's groups, anti-poverty organizations—a cross section of community-based groups, and I call that 'politics.'"

In recent months, the NDP has been running neck and neck with the Liberals, well ahead of Brian Mulroney's Conservatives, who are in power but at an all-time low among decided voters. McLaughlin's background outside the establishment, her consensual style and her willingness to listen to the public may be a reason for the party's recent gains in pub-



lic-opinion polls.

**Mother and milk farmer:** Audrey Brown was born in Dutton, a small southwestern Ontario town, to Margaret Brown, an artist and journalist, and the late William Brown, a co-op credit manager. Serious family illness during her *girlhood* made the entire family aware of the need for universal medical care (then non-existent but shortly to be pioneered by the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation Party (CCF), forerunner of the NDP, in Saskatchewan.) Audrey finished high school at age 16. Too young to go to university, she enrolled in Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph. There she met Don McLaughlin, whom she married at 18. The couple started a milk farm that she ran by herself during the summer months when her husband attended teachers' college. While raising two small children, she herself earned a bachelor of arts degree by correspondence from the University of Western Ontario, well outside the ivied halls of academia. (Her children, David and Tracy, are now young adults; McLaughlin now has two grandchildren.)

In 1963, the family went to live in West Africa, where Audrey taught at Adisadel College in Ghana. This experience fueled her interest in international affairs, particularly as they affect the Third World. Since then, she has traveled extensively in Africa, Latin America, Europe and the Caribbean.

In 1967, the McLaughlins returned to Toronto. After earning a masters degree in social work from the University of Toronto, Audrey worked in a variety of social-work jobs—"Not from behind a desk," she said, "but with advocacy groups in the community." She served as executive director of the Metro Toronto Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association and was a caseworker with the Children's Aid Society of Toronto. Her social work convinced her that, in addition to addressing human needs, one had to face up to problems in the system. It was during that phase of her career that she became "politicized" and joined the NDP.

Her marriage having broken up in 1975, McLaughlin decided to leave Toronto in 1979. She moved out of the mainstream and out to the Yukon, where she operated a consulting business based in Whitehorse, specializing in community development and aboriginal issues. There she became involved in NDP politics. And when the New Democrats under Tony Penikett formed the territorial government, she observed firsthand the party's consultative approach, the "Yukon 2,000" program, in which government representatives went out and met with Yukoners to hear their concerns and priorities.

"The consultative process is easier within a small population," said McLaughlin. "But even within that small population, in the Yukon there were people who had never before sat down at a table together, white people who had lived all their lives in the Yukon and had never talked with a native person, miners who had never talked with environmentalists, and so on."

Can this kind of listening process and public participation take place on a national scale? "Not only is it possible but it had better happen," said McLaughlin. She sees the public's current distrust, cynicism and alienation from politicians as the direct result of politicians failing to consult with the grass roots. But in running for office, becoming a federal member of Parliament for the Yukon and then heading a party in the federal House, McLaughlin herself has joined the milieu that most people define as "politics," one that ordinary citizens often find inaccessible and remote.

**Party and politics:** She insists that politics outside Parliament and politics within Parliament must be a parallel, hand-in-hand process. "I understand," she said, "that some people find it more satisfying to work with a single-interest group. And such groups are very important in what they do, but it's

equally important to have members in the House who can implement policies. If you don't have anyone in the House who will support your point of view, then all your good work outside Parliament comes to naught."

McLaughlin urges unionized workers to view the NDP as their political arm. "Where we have been in government, we've been able to implement some of the best labor laws in Canada, and the first to do so in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the Yukon," she said. The labor movement in Canada became formally part of the NDP in 1961, when Canadian Labour Congress affiliates united with the CCF. However, not all trade unionists vote NDP—if they did, it would long ago have formed a government at the federal level.

In recent months, the party has been running high in the polls, a breakthrough that McLaughlin believes is due not only to the Conservatives' unpopularity but also to the NDP's adherence to principle and its sense of the wider picture. She said, "After Oka [last summer's confrontation in Quebec over native land claims], I was the only party leader in the House who kept continually asking the government, 'What are you going to do about aboriginal rights?' Another example: we voted against the government motion supporting the U.N. Security Council resolution that led to the Gulf war." (Ironically, Canada's participation in the Gulf war meant that McLaughlin, as a party leader in wartime, was appointed to the Privy Council of Canada.)

McLaughlin is optimistic about her party's chances in 1993. And she finds it ironic, given that the NDP has been running close to the Liberals in the polls, to be asked whether she would support the Liberals in a coalition if one were required to oust the Conservatives. "Why isn't the question, 'Would the Liberals join with us?'" Both the Conservatives and Liberals are the parties of big business, she said. "They both have a corporate agenda." Optimistically, she pointed to the 1990 victory of the NDP in Ontario and noted, "Politics are so volatile now that anything can happen." (The NDP is in power in Ontario and forms the official opposition in three other provinces.)

**New Democratic order:** "I'm not saying the world would be perfect if we had a NDP federal government," she said, "but at least we would come with a different perception and attitudes and set of values. Canada is now operating in terms of what the economic bottom line is. We're even down to the point of saying to Quebec, 'You can't afford to leave!' and Quebec is saying, 'We can afford to leave!' That's the argument? What kind of argument is that for a country? It's like in a marriage saying, 'When I can afford to leave, I'm going to go.'"

Since the failure of Conservative Premier Brian Mulroney's Meech Lake Accord, which would have given special status to Quebec, several federal and provincial commissions have been holding public hearings on constitutional matters. The failure of Meech Lake resulted largely from the belief among Canadians outside Quebec (including McLaughlin, who opposed the accord) that crucial constitutional changes were being made behind closed doors by 11 white males (the 10 provincial premiers and the prime minister) without regard for the rights of women, native people and other groups.

McLaughlin's background has trained her in discussion, communication and consensus-seeking, characteristics that are crucial to working out an agreement between Quebec and the rest of Canada. "Surely there is something in terms of spirit and soul and values and priorities above the bottom line," she said.

The consensual style may be the route to finding that "something" that will keep Canada together. ☐

Ruth Latta is an Ottawa-based writer.

A version of this story appeared in Our Times of Toronto.

"tough bureaucratic infighter" but an "almost ideal bureaucrat," "a creation of the NSC staff system and Bill Casey," a man who rose to power not because of his analytical work but "because of his managerial skills."

**Reaganaut:** In March 1987, Gates was forced to withdraw his name from consideration as CIA director because of his own role in Iran-contra. Gates, then acting CIA director, had been nominated by President Reagan to replace the ailing William Casey.

Days before Iran-contra broke in November 1986, Gates, then CIA deputy director, prepared the testimony—a string of fabricated lies—that CIA Director William Casey gave on Nov. 21, 1986, to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence about the CIA's knowledge of the diversion of funds to the contras. The *Post's* Lou Cannon and Bob Woodward put it more diplomatically: the Casey testimony, as prepared by Gates, "describes an operation that does not resemble what was known within the CIA at the time."

**Scandal-Gates:** Perhaps Gates is most vulnerable on the subject of his alleged involvement as a key player in two scandals currently unfolding in Washington.

The first is the alleged arms-for-hostages deal between representatives of the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign and envoys from Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. In early April, Ari Ben-Menashe, a former Israeli intelligence officer, told me that Gates, while employed as the executive assistant to Carter's CIA Director Turner, "worked very closely" with two representatives of the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign who in early 1980 approached Iran about striking a deal to have the American hostages held in Teheran until after the 1980 election. (See *In These Times*, April 17.) Ben-Menashe says those two representatives were Earl Brian, a former secretary of health and welfare for California under Gov. Reagan who left public service in 1974 to deal arms with Iran, and Robert McFarlane, who was a national security adviser under Reagan. Ben-Menashe stated in a sworn deposition that McFarlane had a "special [paid] relationship" with Israel since 1978, when McFarlane worked as an aide to the late Sen. John Tower (R-TX).

A source who requested anonymity told me that Gates was one of six representatives from the 1980 Reagan-Bush team who finalized the alleged arms-for-hostages deal with Iran in October 1980 at a series of meetings in Paris. Four other members of the team whom several sources claim participated in those meetings are Casey, Bush, Gregg and Brian. All have denied any such involvement.

The second scandal involves U.S. arms sales with Iraq. According to Ben-Menashe, one of his assignments at the end of 1987 "was to stop the flow of chemicals to Iraq." He says he traveled to Santiago, Chile, in the fall of 1988 and tried to financially induce Carlos Carduen, owner of Carduen Industries, to stop selling Iraq chemicals used in the production of chemical weapons. According to Ben-Menashe, then-CIA Deputy Director Gates was the architect of this policy and the official charged with executing it.

In addition, the *Financial Times* of London reported on April 17, "The White House allowed the shipment of military spare parts to Jordan until just before the outbreak of the air war against Iraq in January, according to past and present U.S. government officials. ... The shipments continued after U.S. intelligence advice that [Jordan] was being used as an illegal conduit into neighboring Iraq. ... The warning was delivered to Mr. Robert Gates. ... No changes were made to the way in which the export of military-related equipment to Jordan from the West was scrutinized." The *Financial Times* further reported that the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on international economic policy and trade is investigating the U.S. sale of chemical-weapon precursors, biological agents and dual-use technology to the Soviet Union.

A veteran of the CIA operations branch who requested anonymity told me that Gates' involvement in these two scandals disturbs some longtime CIA officers. He said, "There are three factions in the company, a good, a bad and one that draws its pay. The 'good' faction has been taking a lot of beating."

According to this source, who worked with the CIA against Fidel Castro, Bush and Gates are part of the "bad" faction, a group that has used the agency to further their own political ends. He cites the alleged 1980 arms-for-hostages deal and the U.S. arms shipments to Iraq as two prime examples.

"A lot of the old-timers are just not going to put up with it," he said. "If Bush and Gates want to pull a snafu and it's totally illegal, they [the old-timers] aren't going to go along with it. I know this for a fact: if Gates does [become CIA director], he's in more trouble than he is if he doesn't. He is going to have a lot of the old-time operatives quit. They don't appreciate his political aspects. Gates can never command the respect of his people. He's no Stormin' Norman."



## Hit or Ms.

The Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) is pleased to announce the winners of its 1991 Hit or Ms. awards. The Ms. awards salute women who stand up for their rights in the workplace; the hits go to actions or attitudes smacking of sexism. Topping the Ms. list are the Delta Pride Catfish workers, for overcoming incredible odds to win a union contract; *Good Housekeeping* magazine, for its "sympathetic and realistic" portrayal of a working mother in its "new traditionalist" ad campaign; and New York state Supreme Court Judge Carmen Ciparick, who last month ruled that women have a constitutional right to safe, legal abortions. *New York Times* editor Max Frankel and NBC News President Michael Gartner topped the Hit list for their "shameful revival of yellow journalism" in releasing the name of the woman who accused William Kennedy Smith of rape. George Bush and his congressional cohorts were also thumped for their relentless pursuit of an anti-family agenda.

## Judgment days

"Winnie Mandela has emphatically *not* been convicted by a jury of her peers, but by a single judge in a racist legal system," says Coretta Scott King, chief executive officer of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and widow of the slain civil-rights leader. "It is my feeling that this is just another cynical attempt to discredit the leadership of the anti-apartheid movement, and if there is any justice at all in South Africa Mrs. Mandela will be vindicated in her appeal." King made her statement after Mandela was sentenced to six years in prison for her part in the 1988 kidnapping and beating of four young men in Soweto.

## Solidarity revisited

Benjamin Linder's hydro-project is almost finished. Linder, a "humanitarian engineer" from Portland, Ore., was killed by a contra unit in northern Nicaragua in 1987 while working on a small hydroelectric dam, part of a larger development project to build basic infrastructure in the mountainous region. Linder's family has launched a campaign to raise the final \$25,000 of the \$430,000 needed to finish the dam, which will serve 4,000 Nicaraguans. Family members will be touring the country in an attempt to generate donations. For more information on organizing a local benefit with the Linders, call (503) 227-5803. Tax-deductible contributions can be sent to the Ben Linder Memorial Fund, 4155 N.W. Aspen Ave., Portland, OR 97210.

## Opportunities denied

The politics of hiring are black and white, according to the Urban Institute. The institute's new report, *Opportunities Denied, Opportunities Diminished: Discrimination in Hiring*, marks what the institute claims is the first major study that directly measures unequal treatment of black and white job-seekers. While white applicants face unfavorable treatment in 7 percent of their job searches, blacks experience discrimination almost three times as often. The 33-page report concludes that "when equally qualified young men—one black and the other white—apply for entry-level jobs, the white advances further in the hiring process one out of every five times." For more information call the Urban Institute at (202) 857-8702.

## Earthly airwaves

The folks at *Earth on the Air* want to take grass roots to the airwaves to link up environmental and social-justice themes. An "eclectic," non-profit radio program, the three-year-old Seattle-based *Earth on the Air* wants to reach outside the Pacific Northwest and hopes to distribute a weekly half-hour show to public and community stations nationwide by 1992. Segments will include news features, music, poetry, drama and interviews—all recorded by "ordinary citizens" or independent producers—that explore how the ideas and actions of individuals affect the Earth and its inhabitants. For submission guidelines, call (206) 632-1451.

## Feeling the heat

The global average temperature for 1990 was the highest ever recorded, according to the Goddard Institute for Space Studies. The seven warmest years since 1880 have occurred in the past 11 years.

Please send timely news about local activities, follow-ups on stories we've run or other interesting bits of information—including your address and phone number—to: Kira Jones, In These Times, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

# INSHORT

## Loggers, farmers razing Guatemala's rainforest

UAXACTUN, GUATEMALA—Ancient Mayan kingdoms lived in harmony with the lush, Peten rainforest in northern Guatemala for centuries, but the jungle here may disappear in just a few decades under the current parade of chain saws and machetes.

Forty percent of the country's rainforest has been destroyed in the past two decades. Unable to find land in the south, machete-wielding farmers have migrated north to slash and burn a living out of the jungle. Cattle ranchers and loggers have also moved in to cut down Guatemala's last frontier.

At the current rate, the Peten jungle—one of the largest rainforests in the hemisphere—will be gone in 30 years, taking with it hundreds of rare plant and animal species, said Santiago Billy, who works for Guatemala's National Environmental Commission.

Only recently has Guatemala moved to stop the destruction, but environmentalists are losing out to powerful lumber companies, entrenched agricultural traditions and official corruption.

The Mayans supported a kingdom of 1 million in the jungle, but in modern Guatemala, the Peten has been the country's least-populated province.

In the '60s, however, the government encouraged landless peasants to move to the Peten to relieve the tremendous demand for farmland in the south—where a handful of families own much of the best land.

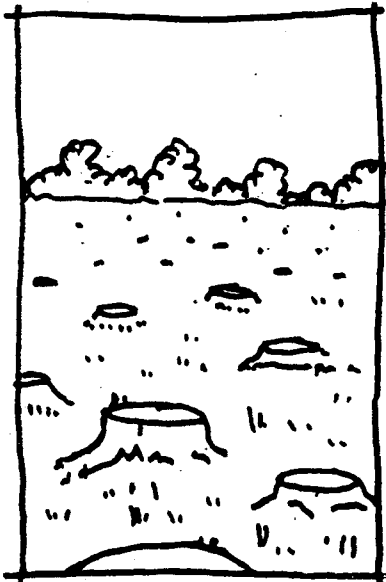
The population has jumped from 15,000 to 250,000, and an estimated 250 new farmers migrate to the Peten each day. Eduardo Frutus, a former Peten logger, said five villages have sprung up along a remote logging road he helped build in 1977. But not only did farmers receive land at bargain rates but they were granted government loans to help clear the trees.

"You just cut down the foliage and plant and soon you are harvesting," said Moises Herrarta, a farmer who moved to the Peten in 1976. "There is a future here."

But after a few years of growing corn and beans, farmers exhausted the tropical soil and moved on to cut new fields. Ranchers, in turn, took over abandoned fields. Cattleman Luis Sagastume said he paid \$40,000 for three ranches in the Peten, land that would have cost almost \$600,000 in southern Guatemala.

Logging companies moved in and began exporting coveted 100-year-old mahogany and cedar trees, worth up to \$7,000 each.

"Fifteen years ago was the golden



age," Frutus said. "You took out lots of wood. No one ever thought of ecology."

With 100,000 acres of jungle disappearing every year and the Peten fast on its way to looking like Kansas, the Guatemalan government finally woke up to the crisis.

Last year, the government created the Maya Biosphere Reserve, which covers 3.7 million acres in the northern half of Peten department. The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) is supporting the project with \$10.5 million.

Government officials deny they are walling off the jungle. Instead, they say the biosphere is meant to encourage "Peteneros" to live off the land without destroying it. CONAP, the agency charged with policing the biosphere, for example, is encouraging farmers to gather chicle, xate leaves and peppercorns for export.

In a thatched hut in Uaxactun, a tiny village in the biosphere, chicle workers recently stirred a black cauldron of raw gum and pressed the brown mass into molds. The dirt floor was sticky, and barefooted children plucked patches of raw chicle from the pot.

Chicle workers can earn \$80 a week, a better living than subsistence farming. But gathering the chicle and xate is a delicate process, and veterans say newcomers to the Peten are killing many of the trees.

CONAP says logging can be done on a smaller scale, with more emphasis on exporting rosewood, breadnut and other "secondary" trees which grow faster than cedar and mahogany. Logging companies must produce a forest-management plan to get permits to cut within the biosphere. No permits have been issued this year, and the saws at some lumberyards in the Peten are silent. Also at stake is the tourist trade. Thousands of nature lovers flock to the Peten each year to explore Mayan sites and bird-watch.

"Nobody wants to come and see a desert," an AID official said. "They want to see toucans and monkeys."

Despite the new measures, the cutting continues. Enforcing complicated environmental laws in a frontier land traditionally beyond the

reach of authorities is proving next to impossible.

While officially sanctioned logging has dropped, the bulk of Peten timber is exported illegally, said Ramon Carrera, a CONAP official. Logging companies often cut more trees than allowed by their permits or buy trees cut by pirates who roam the jungle with chain saws, Carrera said. Truckdrivers pay off the army and the police to drive loads to Mexico, Belize or Guatemala City.

"It costs about \$400 in bribes to drive a load of wood to Guatemala City," said Erwin Tager, general manager of the San Nicolas plywood company in Santa Elena, a logging boom town in the Peten.

Mexican loggers are also chopping down the Peten. Satellite photos show large, barren patches where trees have been cut along the Guatemala border inside the biosphere.

Just 200 unarmed forest guards are assigned to the biosphere. Most areas go unpatrolled. Last year, CONAP stopped seven trucks loaded with pirated wood but had to let them go when the drivers drew their pistols.

The army is bogged down fighting guerrillas and has shown little interest in stopping illegal wood shipments. Environmental officials say that, in some cases, the army itself is involved in the trade.

Some say the biosphere has meant a huge, environmental bureaucracy that makes doing anything to the forest impossible. Residents of Uaxactun smiled and shook their heads last week as 10 CONAP officials spent an entire day on paperwork to allow the village to make lumber out of a dead cedar tree blown over during a storm.

Many observers say progress has been made in the past few years. They say logging companies are now pursuing sound reforestation plans and that overall environmental consciousness has been raised. And from the top of the temples at the lost Mayan city of Tikal, the jungle still seems to go on forever.

Yet it's difficult to find much optimism among the old-timers in the Peten. Some say the area will go the way of southern Guatemala, where intensive farming and ranching has turned many areas into desert. The quetzal, Guatemala's endangered national bird, is much easier to find in Costa Rica, where the forests have been protected.

Migration to the north will continue as long as farmland in the south remains scarce and as long as agrarian reform is considered subversive. Meanwhile, more wood may be leaving the Peten than ever before.

"In two years, there won't be any more cedar or mahogany left south of the biosphere," Tager said. "So far, we are maintaining the north, but these people will go north when the south is exhausted." —John Otis



By Julia Gilden

## California's schools fight for their lives

**I**N TWO SHORT YEARS, THE RICHMOND UNIFIED School District in northern California has gone from President George Bush's national model of choice to a symbol of California's record budget deficit.

Gov. Peter Wilson has stridently portrayed Richmond's bankruptcy as an example of irresponsible education spending. This stance has not only insulted educators throughout the state who have endured a decade of chronic underfunding, but also has left 130,000 public employees wondering if they'll be next in the Republican "compromise" governor's strategy to balance the budget on the backs of state workers. Their contracts are up for renegotiation at the end of the fiscal year.

As legislators struggle to battle next year's budget, 10,000 teachers and thousands more support staff and administrators throughout the state have already received layoff notices.

According to state union officials, there is cause for concern. In the '70s, Wilson spearheaded a statewide initiative to outlaw strikes by public employees when he was mayor of San Diego. He eventually lost that battle but did succeed in getting a local ordinance passed in San Diego short-circuiting public-employee unions' most effective weapon.

**Innovation's price tag:** Situated just north of Berkeley on the northeastern shores of San Francisco Bay, the Richmond school district in 1987 was plagued by poor test scores, segregated schools and low-paid teachers. That year the school board hired Walter Marks, a visionary superintendent with a poor record of money management, to head the district that includes 35,500 primary and secondary students from poverty-stricken to affluent towns. He transformed Richmond into an expensive system with specialized campuses and an array of electives at every grade level.

According to United Teachers of Richmond President Gabrielle Moore, Marks hired many new teachers to staff the programs and brought their salaries from nearly the lowest in the state to within a competitive range. But he also hired new administrators at high salaries and presided over a smoke-and-mirrors budget. He illegally used federal Chapter I funds for programs other than those earmarked for below-grade-level students. A similar move had convinced the Wake County, N.C. school district to let Marks go in 1984. Moore says the Richmond schools' debt, totaling \$50 million, was largely caused by Marks' fiscal schemes, which were not properly reviewed by school-board officials and were kept secret from teachers. This prompted the district to buy out Mark's contract late last year at a cost of \$94,000. Recently, he was hired as superintendent of the Kansas City, Mo., school district, despite warnings from the Richmond district.

Because of this fiscal mismanagement, the Richmond district ran out of operating capital at the beginning of the year. It was forced to apply to the state for a bail-out loan to get through this school year.

Wilson responded by insisting that teachers' collective-bargaining rights be suspended as a loan condition, a contingency to which the district would not agree. In April the district declared bankruptcy, and plans

were made to close the schools a month early.

A group of parents then sued the state, charging that California had an obligation to provide education for the duration of the school year. Superior Court Judge Ellen James ruled on April 29 that the state had to provide operating capital, but Wilson immediately countersued, saying a superior

### EDUCATION

court did not have jurisdiction over the state administration. That case is scheduled to be heard by the state Supreme Court later this year. Meanwhile, the district is being run by an interim officer appointed by state Superintendent of Schools Bill Honig, who in early April made an unsuccessful bid to impose binding arbitration on union disputes with the state over expected budget cuts and staff layoffs in the district.

Wilson argues that the state should not have to pay for every school district's poor fiscal oversight, but educators claim he has reduced the state's children to business investments.

**Pointing the finger:** Prior to Marks' short tenure, the Richmond school district had been ignored by everyone under the sun, according to California Federation of Teachers attorney Bob Bezemek, who is working with parents and teachers to salvage as much of Marks' program as possible. Bezemek says that Marks' innovations had effectively desegregated the schools and stemmed white flight.

Just as the beleaguered district's crisis was hitting the newsstands, the state announced a budget shortfall for fiscal 1991-92 of \$7 billion. But by the time this month's recounts of income taxes are complete, the figure is projected to be close to \$15 billion, according to Wilson's office. This totals 30 percent of the Golden State's annual budget, making it the largest state deficit in the nation.

California's school system, which receives less than half of the state's general-revenue fund annually, cannot be blamed for the deficit. According to a new report by the Franchise Tax Board that evaluated state income taxes between 1980 and 1989, California has been a national leader in terms of concentration of income. The top 10 percent of Californians now control more than 40 percent of the state's reported total income. The share of income going to the top 1 percent increased by 60 percent over the past decade, while the wage income for the bottom 90 percent of taxpayers declined by .2 percent. Wages for the top 10 percent increased by 29 percent and for the top 1 percent by 79 percent. During the same period, tax loopholes were created for the wealthy by then-Gov. George Deukmejian and the rate reduced from 11 percent to 9.5 percent.

Thus Wilson inherited a huge budget deficit when he took office last January. But ignoring pleas to restore Deukmejian's tax cuts or to tax large corporations and wealthy individuals at a higher rate, Wilson announced that a combination of program cuts and sales

### Educators throughout the state have endured a decade of chronic underfunding.

taxes to fund public programs would be necessary this year.

In recent weeks he has relented, saying the budget would feature a combination of cuts and new taxes. But in the eyes of union officials, Wilson's response to Richmond sent a clear message throughout the state to the approximately 35 other districts on the verge of bankruptcy and to nearly a third of the state's districts operating in or near the red—all victims of chronic underfunding, waves of immigrants from non-English-speaking countries, a continuing influx of

new arrivals from other states and a rising birthrate. Two hundred thousand new students flood the state's schools annually.

Although in recent years teachers' contracts have been regularly compromised and cost-of-living adjustments postponed, Wilson has characterized unions and their leaders as money-lusting public servants who siphon off 80 to 85 percent of the education budget for teachers and other staff.

Now unionists fear that Wilson's attempt to set a collective-bargaining-suspension precedent at Richmond could trigger a series of similar demands if other school districts throughout the state go under. This, of course, is a likely outcome if Wilson convinces the legislature to cut education funding. So far, however, efforts to suspend Proposition 98, passed last year to guarantee that at least 41 percent of the state's general funds goes to education, have failed. But Wilson has another trump card: union leaders claim he plans to withhold \$1 billion from the state's schools on a loophole in Prop 98.

**Prop 13 legacy:** California's education-funding problems can be traced to 1978, when the now-infamous Proposition 13 was passed. It froze property values at their 1978 rates and prohibited local school districts from raising property taxes or holding bond issues to raise funds—the two traditional means of paying for public education. Many elderly homeowners were spared losing their homes as a result of Prop 13, but the real beneficiaries were owners of commercial property and large apartment houses.

Now, as all state schools fight for their lives, local districts are looking for ways to raise funds again. Businesses are being asked to contribute more than the standard equipment loans and consultant services, cities are considering special taxes, and consortiums of parents, educators and citizens who believe in the value of education are brainstorming ways to raise money.

In San Francisco, for example, the city is considering holding a special election to add a quarter-cent sales tax for two years that could be earmarked for local education.

Several recent statewide rallies have drawn thousands to local and state legislative chambers to find out where California's legislators stand when it comes to fighting for future literate members of society. Op-ed articles in the press written by retired educators and businessmen are posing questions ranging from whether education is an appropriate business for government to engage in to whether quality education must be a constitutional guarantee in order to run a democracy.

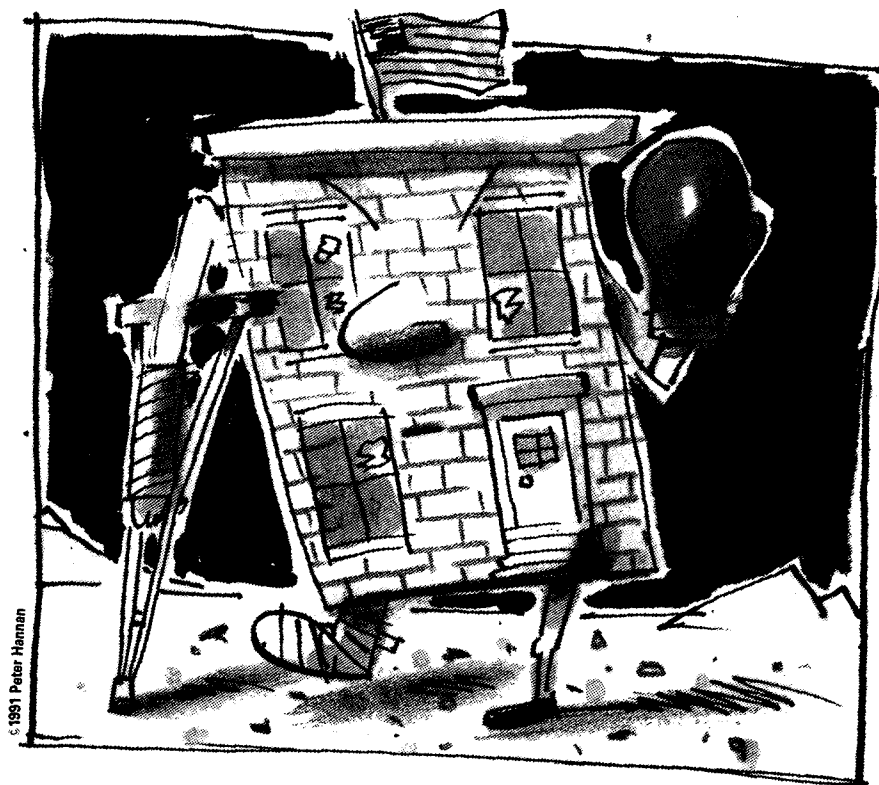
Using the ouster of Britain's Margaret Thatcher as a model, Jack Henning, secretary-treasurer of the California AFL-CIO, is calling for a statewide populist revolt against the sluggish legislature and Wilson's administration. He hopes that organized labor, teachers, beneficiaries of social programs and liberals will lead the charge.

"Every social program is being tossed aside because the governor won't dare touch the rich or the corporations," charges Henning. "But the Democrats are not moving in any organized fashion."

"Wilson doesn't have a commitment to public education," says Federation of Teachers attorney Bezemek. "The only people who can get an education now are those who can buy it."

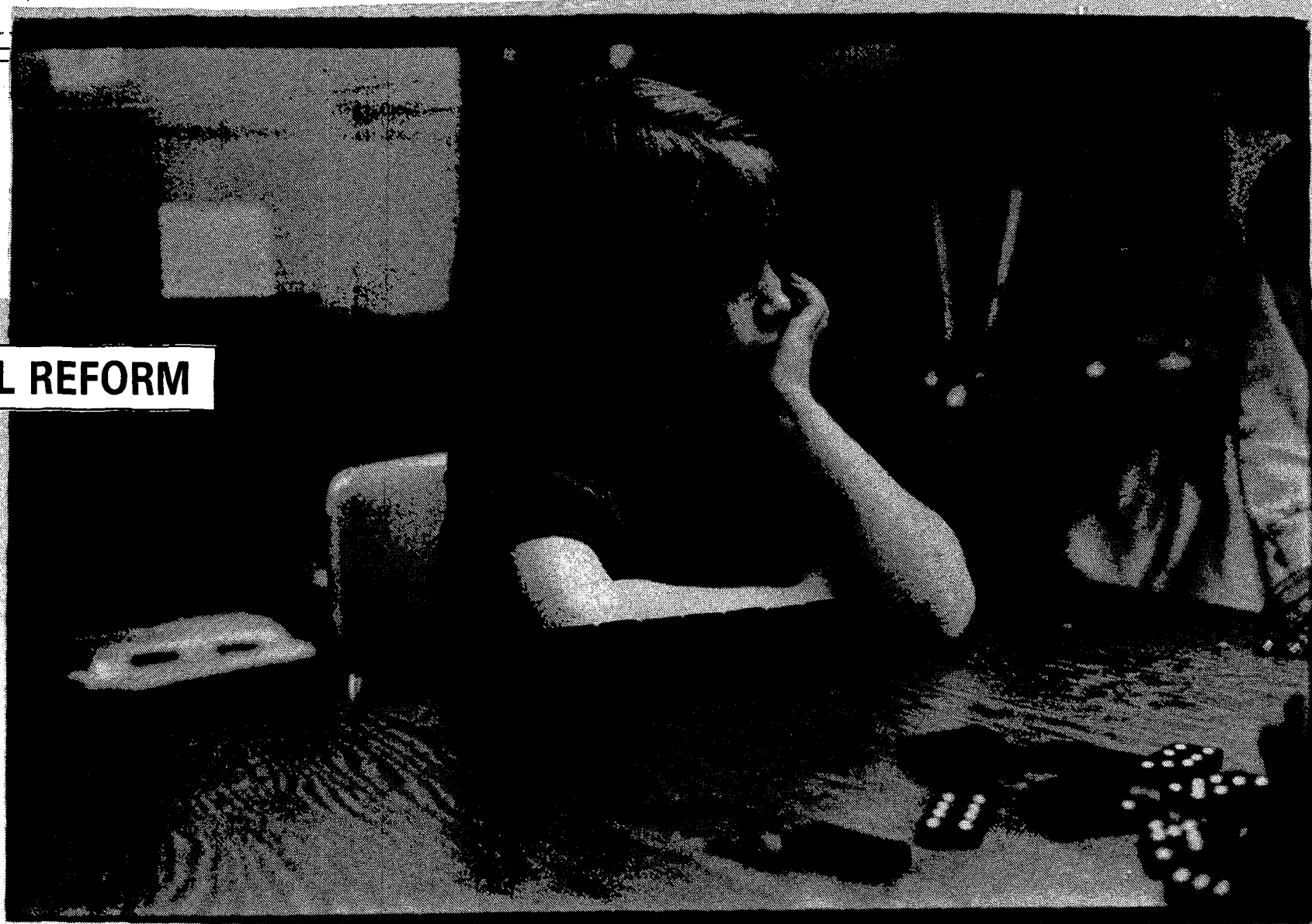
Julia Gilden is a San Francisco-based journalist.

IN THESE TIMES MAY 22-28, 1991 7





## SCHOOL REFORM



© Steve Cagan

This is the second story in a three-part series on education reform.

By David Moberg

**T**ALK OF "CHOICE" IN EDUCATION CONJURES up starkly contrasting images. Some see a wondrous free market in which good schools thrive and bad schools fail as each institution—led by its entrepreneur-principal—tries to satisfy the desires of client-parents liberated from the stifling bureaucracy of the public-school monopoly.

Others see free-market choice producing an educational system even more inequitable than today's—a system in which privileged families gain more privilege and the poor are more neglected, in which public responsibility for education dwindles and schools will more resemble Saturday morning kids' television (a prime example of free-market education) than a 21st century version of the romanticized little red schoolhouse.

**Choice combination:** Yet choice in education should be seen as neither panacea nor pariah. In combination with other reforms, aimed at promoting equity, democracy and a flowering of innovation, choice is rather a natural, constructive complement in the radical transformation that American schools need.

Early in our history as a nation, education was largely a matter of choice (and most kids had little schooling). Different models abounded, including paternalistic charities or academies controlled by a private elite, small districts under direct citizen control and the emerging bureaucracies under public school boards. But education increasingly tended toward "one best system" of public schools designed to educate (and properly Americanize) the entire population.

It was an educational vision that paralleled the emergence of large factories, of the burgeoning urban (and often immigrant) working class, and of both corporate and governmental bureaucracies. Early in this century, in the furthest elaboration of the "one

## For better education, it's a choice combination

best system" ideal, Oregon mandated not only school attendance but enrollment in public schools. In response to this, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled parents could send children to schools of their choice, although the state could regulate educational standards.

The current movement toward choice in public schooling has several roots. Most prominently, there are the ideological enemies of public education: the tradition of laissez-faire education (and the tradition of interested private and church-related schools). But some left advocates of educational innovation—dating back at least to the alternative-schools movement of the '60s—and of greater educational opportunity for the poor have also embraced choice.

Not surprisingly, the concept of "choice" covers a multitude of models whose differing details matter enormously. But, in general, choice plans permit students to use public money through vouchers, tax credits or other reimbursements to pay for any school they attend (often including private institutions), rather than having boards of education both provide money and assign students to public schools.

As choice has gained support, however, there has also been a growing movement toward giving greater "voice" in education either to parents, teachers, principals or citizens as opposed to school bureaucrats—students were more likely to have been included in the '60s. As social scientist Albert O. Hirschman argues, economists (and many conservatives) are prone to see "exit," such as quitting a job or not buying a product, as the main way to express opinion. Political scientists (and most believers in strong dem-

ocracy) view "voice" as the preferred solution.

But there is yet a third, less-defined camp that wants to redefine education. "The point of departure for me is that the way we run schools is old and full of tradition that doesn't make much sense," says TheodoreSizer, professor of education at Brown University and founder of the Coalition of Essential Schools. "It's a diversion to talk about forms of government and choice without addressing this fundamental problem, to wit, that schools are misdesigned to serve anybody very well. We will yap about forms of government rather than how to teach kids."

**The pros and cons:** Choice proponents argue that not only is freedom of choice the American way but that it will also pressure the public-school bureaucracies—responsible for 89 percent of the nation's students—to do a better job. Others supporters say choice programs would extend to the poor the privilege that better-off families already have to pick residence and school. But Deborah Meier, principal of the innovative Central Park East Secondary School in New York, makes the strongest educational argument for choice—yet one that conservatives rarely emphasize: "If you agree there's more than one definition of an educated person and more than one way to get there, you need choice."

There are four major criticisms of the conservative, free-market choice models: they would promote greater social inequity, undermine support for education, subvert democratic culture and public life and work ineffectively to improve schools.

If families can take public money and send their children wherever they want, richer

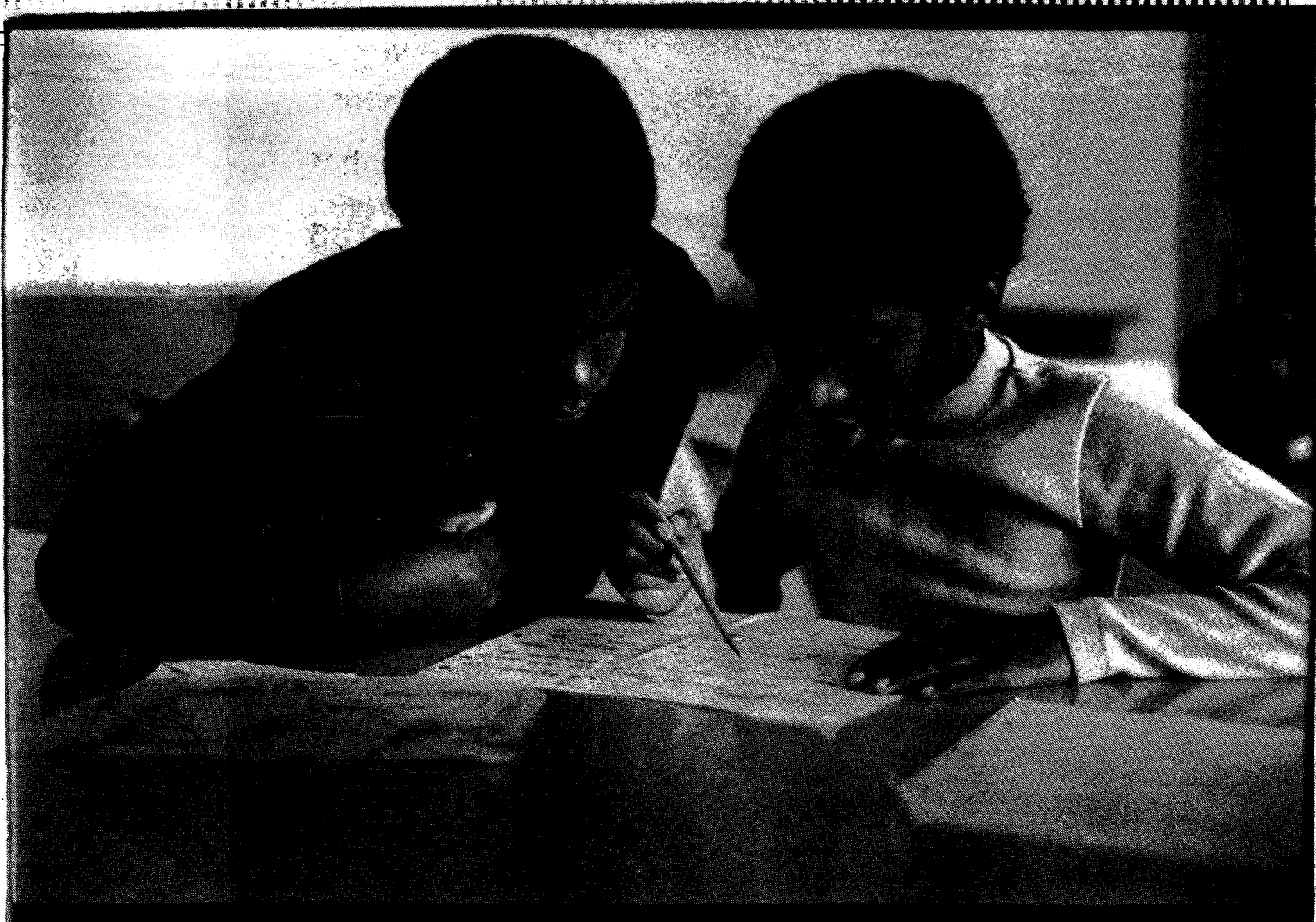
families could simply pay extra to get their children into elite schools (as they do now but without the subsidies). Equally important, the schools in many cases will be making the choice of whom they want to admit rather than parents choosing where they want to send their children. The better schools will "cream" the easy-to-teach students (in many cases including the most promising youth from disadvantaged families). Parents with the necessary skills, connections, information and time will jump through the formal and informal hoops to get their kids into the prestigious schools. This will mean that the average neighborhood school will be a catch basin for the more difficult students, who will be harmfully stigmatized for not making it into prestige schools.

In their study of four big-city school systems, Donald Moore and Suzanne Davenport of Designs for Change, a Chicago-based school-reform group, show that existing magnet-school programs operate as "new improved sorting machines."

The magnet schools have been good for some students, but they have not solved—and may have worsened—the most profound crisis in American education: the failure to engage, inspire and educate most students from poor, black or Hispanic communities.

U.S. schools never have served the average student well. But when half of all students dropped out before graduating from high school in 1950, they could still find half-decent manufacturing jobs. By 1970, 75 percent of students graduated, but the schools did no better job teaching them. Average test scores—based on this expanded population—began their decline. Both dropouts and ill-prepared graduates faced a new, tougher job market. Conservative choice programs might help assertive poor and minority students but are unlikely to help those who need it most. "The real issue," argues Ann Bastian, co-author of *Choosing Equality*, "is how do we fix the mainstream."





Steve Cagan

Proponents of choice avoid addressing that directly, deferring to the invisible hand to make repairs.

**Free-market folly:** There are examples of schools that effectively teach poor kids who would otherwise be written off as impossible, but there are no easy answers about how to replicate their results on a mass scale. Creating innovative education for the disadvantaged through a free market in schools isn't promising. The free market hasn't performed very well for the poor in medicine, housing or even in providing fresh produce at fair prices. The poor are more easily victimized by scams: witness the proliferation of fraudulent private career-training institutes raking in federal subsidies. Poor, ill-educated or immigrant families find it more difficult to obtain relevant information or take advantage of choice (transportation costs in money or time could be prohibitive, for example).

Sophisticated economic analysis demonstrates that market signals of failure don't necessarily prompt firms to innovate or change their internal organization quickly or effectively. It's an especially appalling prospect to think of the millions of students trapped in worsening schools as society waits for the free market to work its magic.

To produce widespread improvements quickly, we should look less to the competitive marketplace model and more to cooperation among schools. That could include better systems of discussion among teachers about what works. Then the schools could allow innovations to percolate upward. Successful schools and groups of teachers should be given the freedom and money to replicate their work and start new schools, following the example of Meier's East Harlem schools.

To the extent that schooling is increasingly seen as a consumer choice and a family responsibility, the public is likely to feel even less of an obligation to provide good education. If private schools select the easier students, they will appear—as they do now—to

be intrinsically better. The public-school system, except in the rich suburbs, will be like indigent medical care under Medicaid—underfinanced, stigmatized, low quality.

For all of its faults and contradictory qualities, public education in the U.S. is expected to provide the basis of a common culture and prepare young people for democratic citizenship as well as for the job market. Marketplace choice reforms are likely not only to increase the already undesirable class and racial separations within schools but also to subordinate education even more to the dictates of business and the job market at the expense of democratic voice and a common public life beyond the marketplace. The schools may be failing their task now of strengthening democratic culture, but the mission should not be abandoned.

**Some restrictions apply:** There are important distinctions in choice plans that can address some of these issues. Excluding private schools as a subsidized option removes some tough issues—especially threats to the critical separation of church and state—but limits the choice of many good schools. Prohibiting supplementary payments by wealthier parents and providing more money for disadvantaged students would address some equity problems. Most important, schools could be required to award slots by lottery and not be selective. States could still impose regulations—desegregation guidelines, prohibitions on corporal punishment, requirements to include the handicapped. But the free-market choice advocates would

fight any of these restrictions.

"I strongly disagree with those who say the marketplace will transform education," says school-choice proponent Joe Nathan, director of the Center for School Change at the University of Minnesota. "I fear the conservative choice agenda and the liberal rejection of it equally."

Even if the marketplace model is deeply flawed, that does not mean choice is a bad idea. If there is no one best system that suits all children equally well, it is essential that there are alternatives. But as both choice supporter Nathan and choice critic Bastian agree, in an educationally equitable and effective system, the choice must be among a variety of types of schools, not between (a few) good and (many) bad schools.

"We should hold out the goal of choice within a revived public sphere," says University of Pennsylvania education historian Michael Katz. "But we should put our primary emphasis on improving all schools."

If choice is to work, it must operate on the supply side as well as the demand side, producing innovative new schools rather than simply offering those already existing. Teachers, working with principals, must have the freedom to innovate. Parents, citizens and even students must have a meaningful voice in defining their schools, along with professional educators.

When there is no uniform approach to education in all the schools, choice is the logical corollary. When there is an abundance of good but different schools, equity

problems diminish. In the interests of both greater democracy and better education, parents and community residents (as well as the educators) should feel that the schools belong to them. Choice can enhance that sense of ownership. If there are meaningful choices of small schools (or schools within schools), choice need not destroy links between communities and the schools within them. Indeed, many reformers argue that schools, especially in big-city neighborhoods, should serve more as full-time community centers and not just part-time holding pens for children.

With increasing innovation, diversity and choice, there are new problems: evaluation and establishment of a common culture. Standardized national testing would be even less appropriate or useful in a diverse system, but marketplace accountability is likely to be inadequate and slow. Brooklyn school board president and educational consultant Norm Fruchter argues for a broadbased outside accreditation of schools by professional inspectors.

Creating a common culture, which the schools do poorly now, is a legitimate democratic ideal. In this country of widely varied traditions with an, at best, fluid sense of national identity, the task requires acknowledging diversity as well. Choice and diversity complicate an already-difficult job of forging this common culture. But if schools are democratic, innovative and equitable, they will provide a better foundation of civic values than today's regimented factory schools.

Given the alternatives, democratic voice rather than marketplace choice should guide the schools. But one of the implications of strong democracy is that teachers, parents and students must have much greater choice in the kinds of schools for the sake of both education and a fuller democracy. But the ultimate, toughest question is not how to govern the schools but how to teach all children in those schools so they can fulfill their potential. □

**Even if the marketplace model is deeply flawed, that doesn't mean choice is a bad idea. If there is no one best system that suits all children's needs equally well, it is essential that there are alternatives.**



# Gun control

Continued from page 3

have to be addressed, especially poverty, lack of opportunity, lack of jobs, drugs and a culture that promotes and glamorizes violence as the easiest solution to personal problems. Congress, however, mired in a budget crunch and dominated by interests that benefit from the increasing maldistribution of American wealth, is years from attacking these problems. "Part of our problem with the Democrats," adds Boucher, "is that they have really given in on root causes of crime."

Calling it another case of "picking out trivial solutions to serious problems," Boucher compares the Brady bill to President Bush's recent suggestion that health-care costs would be reduced by lessening malpractice liability. As freshmen, Peterson and Sanders

have not fought in the notorious gun-control wars on Capitol Hill and thus seem immune to the current general sense of euphoria. The rest of the House is willing to settle for a symbolic victory over the power of the NRA.

**The politics of guns:** While heavy-handed lobbying and generous donations to campaign war chests have given the NRA an aura of lobbying invincibility, they have also sown a good bit of personal enmity on Capitol Hill. The NRA used all its familiar tactics to defeat Brady, flooding Congress with mail and twisting arms. Gun lobbyists reportedly walked into congressional offices with videotapes of ready-made campaign commercials attacking members. The lobbyists threatened to run the commercials in the members' districts in the event of an unfavorable vote. The vitriolic NRA tactics proved somewhat counterproductive on the Brady vote, but the gun lobby's power has never rested in the hands of its

Washington lobbyists.

The real power of the NRA lies in the fact that more than any other grass-roots organization, its members write letters, make phone calls and vote, vote, vote. NRA follows every legislative vote with a direct mailing to its members informing them of their representative's position and urging them to vote accordingly. Ten days before elections, NRA members receive reminders encouraging them to get out and vote the NRA line. And they do. Members of Congress who vote with the NRA can count on gratitude measured in the only commodity more precious than campaign cash—ballots.

However, the very public opinion and activism that has been the NRA's strength appears to have backfired this time. The NRA has always attempted to portray any attempt to restrict access to firearms as the first step down a slippery slope to confiscation of all

firearms and the imposition of communist tyranny on a defenseless populace.

But such hysteria is rapidly losing its power. Anti-gun groups insist that many hunters are becoming disenchanted with the NRA's political tactics. "The NRA doesn't distinguish between its hunting and handgun constituencies," says Beard of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence. "We find that hunters and sports people are not concerned about waiting periods. They see themselves as law-abiding citizens who have nothing to fear from waiting seven days for a gun. They do know, however, that urban folks who never owned a gun and shoot someone are giving decent, law-abiding gun-owners a bad name."

Anti-gun activists have been wishing for such a split for years. And that wish may be coming true. Consider the vote of Rep. Earl Hutto (D-FL): a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, Hutto was one of 17 members to vote for both the Staggers and the Brady bills. Hutto is the archetypal friend of the NRA. One of the most conservative Democrats in Congress, Hutto represents the Florida panhandle. His district is very much a part of the Deep South—conservative, rural, home to many retirees and a populace that believes zealously in the constitutional sanctity of the right to bear arms.

In this bastion of NRA support, few people are threatened by a waiting period or a background check. In fact, according to Hutto press secretary Brian Keeter, a 1989 poll of the panhandle found that 80 percent of residents supported a seven-day waiting period. Indeed, 71 percent of Hutto's constituents voted for a 1990 constitutional amendment to create a statewide three-day waiting period and mandatory background check in Florida. So when the Brady bill reached the House floor, Hutto found himself with a gun-owning constituency strongly supportive of both waiting periods and background checks.

This bodes well for the Brady bill's passage in the Senate. The politics of guns fracture primarily along urban vs. rural lines rather than party or political affiliation. Brady's fate in the Senate, where lightly populated rural states wield disproportionate power, may well depend on the degree to which Western and Southern senators can be convinced that their gun-owning citizens are willing to accept a waiting period. If the Senate is so persuaded, Americans will have to wait a whole seven days before they can legally buy a handgun. □

## READ LATIN AMERICA'S BEST

Readers International brings you today's Best world literature. Each hardcover volume, by subscription, is just **\$9.95** (Retail prices average \$18.95)

Begin your subscription with **HARD RAIN**.

The Author: Ariel DORFMAN, "one of the six greatest living Latin American novelists" (*Newsweek*)

The Book: **HARD RAIN**, "an incandescent narrative...a testament to the workings of the creative process," says London's *Guardian*.

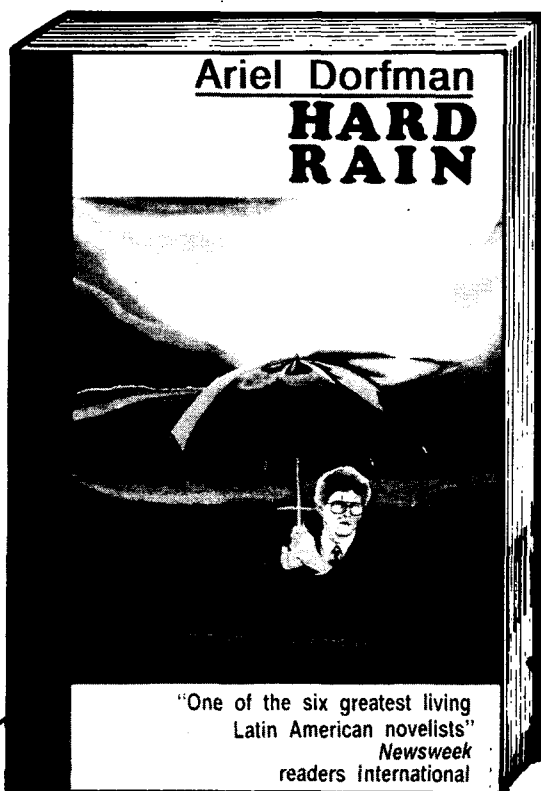
Subject: **Latin America in ferment.**

And a personal quest for moral and artistic integrity as, outside, in the streets and among the people, a battle rages for power.

In hiding in Chile after the Pinochet coup, and for years in exile, Ariel Dorfman has spoken bravely for his country's freedom. **HARD RAIN** is his story about and affirmation of the land he loves.

"Eloquent," says the *New York Times Book Review*. "Teems with people telling their own story, writing their own history, in situations that test the human character and tackle its soul," says *The Times* of London.

If you have ever (or perhaps never) read a book



Choose Your **FREE** Books from these recent, acclaimed titles from the **Américas and the World:**

**Haiti:** *Cathedral of the August Heat* by Pierre Clitandre. 'Combines Creole folklore and naturalism with modernist techniques to express the collective consciousness of Haiti's poorest.' *New York Times Bk Rev* (031)

**Argentina:** Marta Traba's *Mothers and Shadows*. 'A brilliant writer, gifted with a deft sense of understatement and a luminous intellect.' *San Francisco Chronicle* (016)

**Israel/Palestinian:** *The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist* by Emile Habiby. The first book by a Palestinian to become a bestseller in Hebrew. 'A carnivalesque explosion of parody and theatrical farce... surprising and unpredictable.' *London Rev of Books* (062)

**CATHEDRAL OF THE AUGUST HEAT**  
Haiti (031) Pierre Clitandre

**MOTHERS AND SHADOWS**  
Argentina (016) Marta Traba

**THE SECRET LIFE OF SAEED THE PESSOPTIMIST**  
Palestinian/Israeli (062) Emile Habiby

from Latin America, you will enjoy the artistic playfulness – and the intelligence – of **HARD RAIN**.

RI works like a magazine – subscribe for **only \$9.95** (+ \$2 p&p) and you'll get *Hard Rain*, plus one

book of your choice, as described here, **FREE**. Or, subscribe for a year, as you would to a magazine. You'll get RI's next **six** bimonthly hardback selections, at extra savings, plus **TWO FREE** bonus books right away.

Future books include a dramatic novel of fathers and sons in today's South Africa; stories by India's great master of the narrative, Nirmal Verma, and by Latin American Antonio Skármeta; and, from Hungary, the new European feminist voice, Agnes Hankiss. Great reading, in sewn, hardback editions. (Free books in paperback; series vols., cloth)

**RI READERS INTERNATIONAL**  
P O Box 959 Columbia LA 71418

Please begin my subscription to RI with *Hard Rain*. I'll get a new title every other month, at the same special price, \$9.95 (+ \$2 p&p). And send my **FREE** book(s) right away.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. No. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP/Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$11.95 (Can\$14.95) enclosed. My **FREE** book, no. \_\_\_\_\_

**BEST BUY + 2 free books:** ☐ I enclose \$55 (Can\$65) for an annual subscription. I'll get RI's six newest world titles, + **two FREE** books, nos. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Bill me ☐ VISA or ☐ MasterCard for the amount above.

Credit card no. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

ITT 29

### Donnelly/Colt Custom Printing

Box 188-ITT, Hampton, Ct. 06247; (203) 455-9621. Fax: (203) 455-9597. Buttons, bumper stickers, posters, postcards. In stock items available. Union-made. Color 32-page catalog (recycled paper) \$1.

Build in

## Nicaragua

Share work and life with families in rural community

11 months program with solidarity work in construction project in Nicaragua and preparation and follow-up periods in the U.S.

Other programs in Africa and Asia.

Institute for Int'l Cooperation & Development (IICD)  
P.O. Box 103-T,  
Williamstown, MA 01267.  
(413) 458-9828.



By Ken Gluck

MOSCOW

**T**HE OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT PRESS IN THE Soviet Union this month broke an ominous verbal barrier in its coverage of fighting between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The bitter conflict in the Caucasus has recently picked up all the attributes of a real war: helicopter gunships, artillery fire, prisoners of war and the evacuation of civilians. On May 5 the official government daily *Izvestia* dropped its usual euphemisms and openly described the four-year-old conflict as "a civil war between two republics."

The renewed fighting has quelled hopes raised by the surprise April 23 agreement between President Mikhail Gorbachov and nine republican leaders in which Gorbachov pledged not to interfere in the internal affairs of republics and virtually recognized the republics' right to leave the union. For many in the Soviet Union, the agreement signified the beginning of the end of the paralyzing struggle between the central Soviet government and the republics. Even Democratic

## SOVIET UNION

Russia, the country's main opposition coalition, awarded the compromise some lukewarm praise. Before the agreement, Democratic Russia had been calling for Gorbachov's resignation.

But the renewed fighting in the Caucasus illustrates what may prove to be the agreement's fatal omission. It is silent on the many inter-republican and inter-ethnic conflicts that plague the Soviet Union.

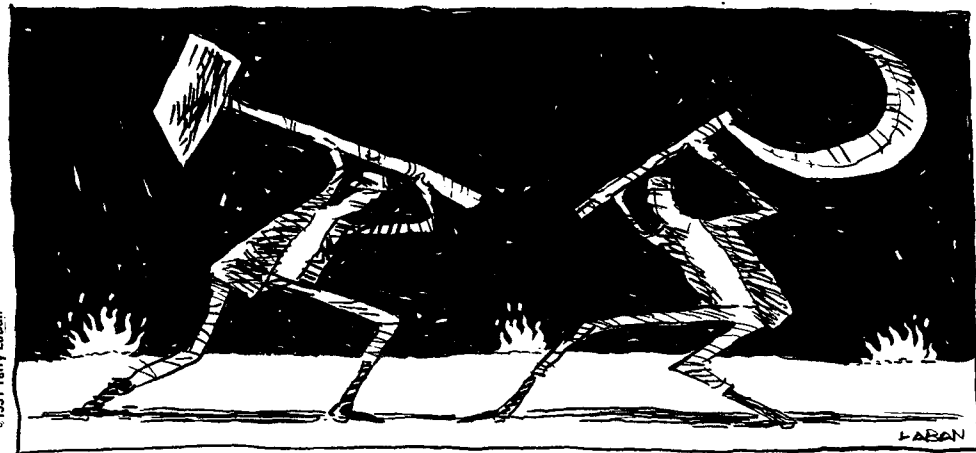
The republics and the pro-reform opposition have been adamant in rejecting interference by the central Soviet government, but they fail to propose alternatives in situations where some form of outside intervention is clearly needed. With a huge number of potential conflicts on the horizon, the Soviet Union must find some way to control these conflicts if it wants stability in the future.

From the beginning of May, the central Soviet government has sharply increased its role in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Troops from the Soviet army and Interior Ministry are taking an active part in the fighting.

**This means war:** The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has steadily escalated over the past four years. Initially the dispute focused on Nagorno-Karabakh, a predominantly Armenian region in Azerbaijan. The Armenians have maintained the territory's right to formally become part of Armenia. The Azerbaijanis have steadfastly argued that their territory is inviolable.

The latest skirmishes center around the mostly Armenian villages in western Azerbaijan, outside of Nagorno-Karabakh. According to the Armenian government, Soviet troops, together with forces from the Azerbaijani government, have besieged the mostly Armenian villages of Getashen and Martunashen since April 29.

The Armenian government accused the Soviet troops of collaborating with Azerbaijani special forces and deporting the local population. At a May 6 press conference in Moscow, Levon Ter-Petrosian, the leader of the Armenian Supreme Soviet, accused the Soviet interior minister of "conspiring with Azerbaijani President Aiza Mutalibov."



## Stability increasingly elusive as longstanding disputes simmer

The Armenians see the deportation as part of an ongoing campaign by the Azerbaijani government to expel the republic's ethnic Armenian minority. The massacres of Armenians in Sumgait in 1988 and in the Azerbaijani capital of Baku in 1990, they bitterly point out, have gone unpunished.

The central Soviet government and Azerbaijani leaders have defended the troops' actions in Getashen and Martunashen. The army's only intention, they claim, was to put an end to the terrorist activity based in the villages. Civilians, they argue, are being evacuated for their own safety.

"Armenia has been conducting an undeclared war on Azerbaijan for more than four years," read a May 5 statement by the Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet. The fighting, the statement emphasizes, has occurred exclusively on the Azerbaijani side of the border.

At the same time, according to the non-official press, forces from the central Soviet government have initiated operations on the Armenian side of the border, allegedly to disarm the volunteer militias there and prevent further border attacks.

In the view of the Armenian government, the motives of the central Soviet government are no secret. Armenia was one of six republics that refused to sign the April 23 agreement. The central government's participation in the conflict represents to the Armenians nothing less than retaliation for their intention to leave the union.

"The union has in effect declared war on Armenia," Ter-Petrosian said in his May 6 statement.

At the May 9 Victory Day celebrations in Moscow, a small group of Armenian refugees demonstrated alongside the parade route, protesting the actions of the Soviet army in the conflict. Many World War II veterans, in uniforms covered with medals, were outraged by signs accusing the central government of betrayal and even of approving genocide.

The Armenian government has appealed to the Russian government, headed by Boris Yeltsin, and to other republics for assistance in the conflict. But it is unclear what sort of help the republics could provide.

The Russian republican government has studiously avoided the appearance of interference in other republics' affairs. To do so would clearly undermine its own fight for sovereignty within the union.

The other republics also have enduring and not always pleasant memories of life in the Russian empire even before they were

drafted into the Soviet Union. Most of the republican leaders believe that Russia, despite its size and importance, should not be granted any special status in the union.

At a May 4 meeting, Ter-Petrosian reportedly reminded Yeltsin of the Russian government's decision forbidding the deployment of Russian soldiers in conflicts outside the Russian republic. Issued in the spring of 1990, the edict has been largely forgotten in the present conflict.

As if to block criticism of its inactivity, the Russian government sent a fact-finding mission to the region on May 5. Further actions, it announced, would be discussed only when the group returned with its report.

Russia's opposition parties clearly favor the Armenians. Armenia's government is headed by anti-communists and nationalists voted into office last summer. The Azerbaijani government is still controlled by the republic's Communist Party, which has used nationalist appeals to generate public support.

Moscow's anti-government press has confined itself mostly to criticism of the specific actions of Soviet troops in the region and expressions of sympathy for the Armenian people. Like the Russian government it supports, the Soviet opposition seems to lack constructive proposals.

After having championed the sovereignty

## The Soviet Union's many inter-republican and inter-ethnic disputes could spark dozens of "minor" civil wars in the not-too-distant future.

of the republics, the opposition is hard-pressed to call for intervention by the central union government. Leonid Gozman, writing in Democratic Russia's newspaper, suggested that only United Nations involvement could solve the dispute. But with the central Soviet government still enjoying veto powers in the U.N., this is hardly a serious proposal.

**More to come:** The conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia was the first and hottest of the disputes among the Soviet republics, but as the republics gain increased independence other conflicts are sure to follow.

The principal source of these conflicts is the significant number of ethnic minorities

in all of the republics. With nationalism sweeping the country, ethnic minorities within republics are seeking the same sovereignty or independence that the republics have sought from the union. The newly empowered republics, trying to consolidate control of their territories, have been reluctant either to compromise or to let go. Inevitably, the ethnic minorities in the republics have appealed to the central union government for help.

By far the most politically significant of these minorities are the millions of ethnic Russians living beyond the borders of the Russian federation. At a recent conference in Moscow, Cambridge sociologist Ernest Gellner pointed to similarities between the Russian minorities in the republics and the ethnic German minorities in Central and Eastern Europe before the war. Like the ethnic Germans in Poland and Czechoslovakia before World War II, the Russians in the republics could become a severe destabilizing factor, according to Gellner.

Further seeds of violence lie in the longstanding border disputes between the republics—some of which long precede the advent of Soviet power.

Both czarist and Soviet governments laid down boundaries according to the political and military needs of the time. These border disagreements were taboo subjects before perestroika. Since the power of the republics was minimal in relation to that of the central government, the border disputes among the republics were largely ignored. But they weren't forgotten.

**Old questions, new importance:** As the republics began to demand sovereignty and even full independence from the union, old border questions quickly took on new importance. Soon after Lithuania's declaration of independence in March 1990, officials in the republican government of Byelorussia announced that the border between the two republics would have to be re-examined. According to some members of the Byelorussian government, the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius is located on their side of the fence.

Similar potential border disputes exist between the Ukraine and Moldavia and among the Baltic republics themselves. Border clashes are most likely in Soviet Central Asia, where the map resembles the gerrymandered voting districts of some American cities.

Without some mechanism to control and eventually negotiate an end to the inter-republican and inter-ethnic disputes, the Soviet Union could see dozens of "minor" civil wars in the future.

The present central Soviet government is not in a position to act as a neutral arbiter. As the opposition charges, it largely plays the conflicts to its own advantage in its power struggle with the republics.

The leaders of the republics are intent on limiting the authority of the central Soviet government in the ongoing negotiations on a new Union Treaty. There is a danger, however, that the new central Soviet government will be powerless either to settle disputes in the republics or to enforce the settlements.

The Soviet Union is rife with potential conflict. Preventing those disputes from blossoming into armed confrontations will be the real test of Gorbachov's new agreement with Yeltsin and the republics.

**Ken Gluck** is an American journalist living in Moscow.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG  
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



# RACANDOR

words such as "quota," "crime" and "welfare" in recent years became highly charged euphemisms for matters of race. And by leaving conservatives alone to frame those important issues, the left now finds itself isolated from mainstream discourse.

**Five Percenter solution:** A parallel development has taken place in the African-American community, with the ascendancy of people such as Shahrzad Ali, whose misogynous book, *The Blackman's Guide to Understanding the Blackwoman*, recently became a runaway bestseller. African-American intellectuals' reluctance to confront the race-mystifying polemics of black cultural nationalism's "Islamic" strain has allowed it to proliferate and prosper. Ali has been richly rewarded for a book that is primarily an elaboration on the catechism of Elijah Muhammad, the late patriarch of the Nation of Islam (NOI).

Many of the most popular rap artists—Movement X, Paris, Poor Righteous Teachers, Brand Nubian, King Sun, Big Daddy Kane and Eric B. and Rakim—profess membership in a secular, breakaway sect of Muhammad's NOI called the Five Percent Nation of Islam. The group propounds a doctrine that is part Freemason and part NOI. Their core belief is that black people are inherently divine and white people inherently evil. They study the Qur'an and a set of "120 Lessons" culled from two generations of writings on various aspects of NOI philosophy. Five Percenters support the official Nation of Islam, led by Louis Farrakhan—hence the NOI leader's frequent presence on so many rap recordings—but they shun the group's stringent moral code.

Since both Ali and the Five Percenters actively discourage self-destructive behavior among those segments of the African-American community long ignored by traditional black leadership, and since their focus is primarily cultural, the corrosive elements of their message are easily dismissed. Consequently, their influence continues to grow.

Among African-American youth, notions of black separatism are finding support in the most unlikely places. For instance, black students at Chicago's Brother Rice High School, a venerable Catholic institution famous for its strict discipline, recently organized their own—and separate—senior prom. Similar situations are occurring at schools across the country. And black college students are particularly active in demanding more race specificity, both in their curricula and in their living arrangements.

**Enough already:** But the issues championed by these students, and supported by the liberal orthodoxy, are in full retreat.

Compensatory strategies with such race-specific policies as affirmative action, business set-asides and anti-discrimination lawsuits are under attack by increasing numbers of white Americans who believe that blacks have been unworthy beneficiaries of society's largess.

"The civil-rights movement is mired in distrust, arcane judicial rulings and harsh economics that force middle-class workers, white and black, to claw for the same jobs," reads part of a May 6 *Newsweek* cover story. "Exhaustion has set in, a sense of disappointment and failure. After more than two decades of government-imposed affirmative action, many whites believe that enough has been done, that the playing field has been leveled, if not tilted, against them."

The front-page prominence of the *Newsweek* story highlights how the race issue has also captured the mainstream media's attention. Lately, publications across the political spectrum have rediscovered the issue and are presenting it in much starker terms than has been the practice since the '60s. The euphemistic quality of mainstream journalism's race coverage may well be a thing of the past. "America's Wasted Blacks," reads the headline of a recent London *Economist* story detailing the nation's unresolved race problem.

**Candid colorblindness:** Even as African-Americans become more curious about their once-ridiculed African heritage and more assertive about expressing this new interest, the general public has suddenly embraced the value of "colorblindness." The new candor incorporates this value; no color deserves immunity from criticism. Conservatives, seeking political advantage wherever they can find it, have adopted the popular colorblindness attitude with gusto.

The notion rings a bell with the American people. After all, Martin Luther King Jr. did dream of a colorblind society where people were "judged by the content of their character."

The belief in colorblind policies is a winning political attribute, and U.S. politicians are scrambling to profess it.

The signs are everywhere: from the White House's strong-armed interference into negotiations between the Business Roundtable and civil-rights leaders about the pending civil-rights bill to George Bush's pre-fibrillation speech lambasting "political correctness" on college campuses, from the Democratic Leadership Council's rejection of quotas and snubbing of Jesse Jackson to Education Secretary Lamar Alexander's strong challenge of diversity standards for college campuses.

**Blaming the victim:** Many African-American leaders are understandably wary of this new candor. After all, they argue, the U.S. is merely 126 years away from one of the most brutal and racist forms of slavery ever practiced, and just 37 years away from legal apartheid. Roger Wilkins, a professor of history at George Mason University and a longtime civil-rights advocate, says, "Like it or not, slavery, the damage from legalized oppression during the century that followed emancipation and the racism that still infects the entire nation, follow a direct line to ghetto life today."

To analysts such as Wilkins, much of what passes for a new openness on racial discourse is simply another way to blame blacks for their own victimization and thus release white America from any obligation to ameliorate the disfiguring legacy of slavery.

This is hardly a new impulse. Since the days of Reconstruction, many white Americans have sought to deny any responsibility for the plight of their ex-slaves. That was the general mindset of the political status quo until the New Deal days of President Franklin Roosevelt, when federal assistance for needy groups became acceptable policy in Depression-ravaged America. President Lyndon Johnson extended Roosevelt's logic into the ambitious and race-specific Great Society programs.

Wilkins blames the election of Ronald Reagan for the country's retreat on the racial front. "What Reagan did was reignite the racism that had been quieted," he says. "It was there, but it wasn't polite to act on it, and people felt somewhat ashamed." Reagan's tenure provided those with overt racist beliefs with the cultural cover they needed to appear socially acceptable, Wilkins argues.

But those racists were not the only ones liberated from the fear of public censure. Those who had legitimate philosophical differences with various aspects of the liberal orthodoxy also were emboldened to mount ideological challenges during the reign of Reagan and now during Bush's tenure. Moreover, the white youth who came of age during this conservative era know nothing of the seminal civil-rights battles fought during the '50s, '60s and '70s and thus are largely ignorant about the nature and scope of African-Americans' grievances. Why, these white youths ask, should they be saddled with the bill for slavery?

**Race-specific blues:** Institutions presumed to be relatively free of bigotry—elite colleges, for example—have been rocked by charges and countercharges of racism. Long-time allies of the civil-rights movement are having second thoughts and leaving the fold; some are even joining forces with right-wing opponents. And many who still think of themselves as liberals place much of the blame for the current racial impasse on the race-specific tactics of the civil-rights movement.

Advocates of race-specific tactics are missing the mark, argues Jim Sleeper, an editorial writer for *New York Newsday*, author of *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York* and a self-professed "civic" liberal. By championing such outmoded policies, these advocates "applaud or at least indulge government's and civil society's 25-year drift from attempting to ensure that people were not categorized on the basis of color to ensuring they are so categorized today, whether they like it or not," Sleeper writes.

Sleeper contends that left apologists "defend a politics based on dramatizing racial grievances, and often can't bring themselves to criticize even its most demagogic and counterproductive excesses." Sleeper's critics accuse him of aiding and comforting the true enemies of racial justice, thereby weakening some necessary taboos against racism. But a price must be paid for candor. Principled critiques of orthodoxies, such as Sleeper's, are often appropriated by opportunists with ulterior motives.

And, in fact, many of Sleeper's harsh assessments of civil-rights strategies are shared by a growing number of analysts. William Julius Wilson, a well-awarded black professor of sociology and public policy at the University of Chicago, echoes Sleeper's view that the time for an emphasis on race-based strategies may have passed. What's more, Wilson attempts to blunt charges that whites who criticize such strategies have racist motives.

**Coalition alienation:** "Many white Americans have turned not against blacks but against a strategy that emphasizes programs perceived to benefit only racial minorities," Wilson argues in the spring edition of *The American Prospect*. "To be against a strategy that emphasizes programs nar-

*Continued on page 22*

IN THESE TIMES MAY 22-28, 1991 13



# EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"



DERBY DAYS

Editor: James Weinstein  
 Managing Editor: Sheryl Larson  
 Senior Editors: Patricia Aufderheide, David Moberg, Salim Muwakkil  
 Assistant Managing Editors: Glenora Croucher, Kira Jones  
 Culture Editor: Jeff Reid  
 European Editor: Diana Johnstone  
 New York Editor: Daniel Lazare  
 In Person Editor: Joel Bleifuss  
 In Short Editor: Glenora Croucher  
 Etc. Editor: Kira Jones  
 Contributing Editor: Peter Karman  
 West Coast Correspondent: Gary Rivlin  
 Washington Correspondents: John Canham-Clyne, John B. Judis  
 Eastern Europe Correspondent: Paul Hockenros  
 Copy Editor: Mary Nick-Bisgaard  
 Editorial Promotions: Gregory L. Walker  
 Researchers: Deirdre Shesgreen, Jim McNeill  
 Editorial Interns: Mike Genett, Reece L. Pendleton

Art Director: Miles DeCoster  
 Associate Art Director: Peter Hannan  
 Assistant Art Director: Lisa Weinstein  
 Production Assistant/Editorial Cartoonist: Terry LaBan  
 Typesetter: Jim Rinnert

Publisher: James Weinstein  
 Associate Publisher: Beth Schulman  
 Co-Business Managers: Louis Hirsch, Finance  
 Kevin O'Donnell, Data Processing/Accounting  
 Advertising Director: Bruce Embrey  
 Classified Advertising: Greg Kilbane  
 Office Manager: Theresa Nutall  
 Circulation Director: Janet Geovanis  
 Fulfillment Manager: Greg Kilbane  
 Concert Typographers: Sheryl Hybert

*In These Times* believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and nonsocialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100

Member: Alternative Press Syndicate

The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright ©1991 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Selected articles are available on 4-track cassette from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in both the Alternative Press Index and the Left Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Subscriptions are \$34.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$61.95 Canada; \$75.95 overseas). Advertising rates sent on request. Back issues \$3; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

This issue (Vol. 15, No. 24) published May 22, 1991, for newsstand sales May 22-28, 1991.

## As the pope sees it, Communism, capitalism are both losers

On May 2, Pope John Paul II issued the third social encyclical of his pontificate, a 114-page commentary on the world economic order in the light of Communism's collapse in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. This encyclical, *Centesimus Annus*, also commemorates the 100th anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, the first papal encyclical to outline a Catholic position on the condition of the working classes, which had become a major social force in the latter half of the 19th century.

As an institution, the Catholic Church had been more at home under feudalism, on which its hierarchical structure was modeled, than under capitalism. Ideologically, the Church was comfortable with feudal communitarian values, the nobility's sense of noblesse oblige and the serfs' acceptance of the position in society into which they were born. On the other hand, the capitalist's acquisitive individualism, social mobility and inherent lack of social responsibility were anathema to official Church ideals.

But there was always a conflict between Church ideology and its role as an institution. Under capitalism, just as under feudalism, the institutional Church identified closely with the ruling class, serving its interests and opposing those who challenged its power. Thus *Rerum Novarum* was issued to counteract the growing influence of the socialist movement among workers and to uphold the principle of private property as a natural right, even while it chastised employers who took advantage of the poverty and dependence of propertyless workers.

In the early part of this century, *Rerum Novarum* facilitated the growth of a Catholic labor movement that was largely successful in opposing socialists in the United States and Western Europe. But by the '60s the Church was out of touch and losing moral authority until Pope John XXIII pushed through the reforms of Vatican II. These reforms, especially the substitution of the vernacular for Latin, modernized and revitalized the Church. They also laid the basis for a new, scripture-based theology, and an unprecedented popular immersion in biblical texts. This new liberation theology has

challenged the institutional Church both by democratizing and demystifying it and by taking up the cause of the poor, especially in Third World countries where the Church hierarchy has traditionally been part of the ruling class.

**A nod to liberation:** John Paul's new encyclical has been taken in the media to be a celebration of the defeat of socialism and the triumph of capitalism. But, reflecting both the traditional Catholic discomfort with capitalist values and the impact of liberation theology on large numbers of Catholics, it is hardly that. John Paul takes the defeat of "so-called 'Real Socialism'" as his starting point. But in referring to "Real Socialism," which he says "turns out to be state capitalism," he is merely accepting Soviet Communism's definition of itself and not passing judgment on other forms of socialism. Insisting that "it is unacceptable to say" that this defeat "leaves capitalism as the only model of economic organization," the pope says it "is necessary to break down the barriers and monopolies that leave so many countries on the margins of development, and to provide all individuals and nations with basic conditions that will enable them to share in development."

Instead of capitalism as now practiced, the pope proposes "a society of free work, of enterprise and participation" with a high degree of social responsibility. Such a society is not directed against the market, per se, "but demands that the market be appropriately controlled by the forces of society and by the state, so as to guarantee that the basic needs of the whole of society are satisfied." Profit in this framework is not seen as the fundamental principle of society but "as a regulator of the life of business," and only one at that. "Other human and moral factors" are, in the long term, "at least equally important for the life of a business," he writes.

In the final analysis, the pope states, economic systems must be judged on the way they serve the common good. Soviet-style Communism has clearly failed. Capitalism, he says, has serious, sometimes disastrous shortcomings.

There is little here that can be seen as a defense, much less a celebration, of real existing capitalism. As the *National Catholic Reporter* points out, an economic system that by definition "uses local, national and international controls to take money from the rich and share it with the poor is not capitalism. It is already something else." Just what else it is remains unclear. But, in our view, the principles laid out in this encyclical are in large part compatible with our own ideas about democratic socialism. They certainly provide a basis for constructive dialogue.



# LETTERS

## Perseverance

I IN DECEMBER 1986, I INTERVIEWED BARBARA HONEgger on my radio program, and she discussed the October Surprise. I felt it was an important story that could become Reagan and Bush's Watergate, so I sent audio tapes of the interview to the Pacifica radio stations, which broadcast it. I sent a tape to The Other Americas Radio, and they produced a program on the October Surprise with interviews of individuals who said they were at the October 1980 Paris meeting with William Casey.

I also sent a tape of the interview to *In These Times*, which resulted in a cover story, "Did Reagan steal the 1980 election?" by Barbara Honegger and Jim Naureckas (June 24, 1987). A producer of the documentary film *Coverup* featured a segment in the film on the October Surprise after reading the article.

I am glad, after four years, that the mainstream media finally considers the October Surprise newsworthy. I would like to thank Joel Bleifuss and *In These Times* for their excellent reporting and persistence in getting the story out. The public needs to support alternative media such as *In These Times*, which many times report important stories ignored by the mainstream media.

Bob DeBolt  
Santa Cruz, Calif.

## Not progress

I APPLAUD HELEN VOZENILEK'S ARTICLE ON WOMEN in the military (*ITT*, April 17). Some institutions are irredeemable, state military systems among them. To say that adding women (gays, lesbians, people of color) humanizes them flies in the face of all the available evidence. What inclusion does accomplish is the militarization of another segment of any population.

The national NOW newspaper tells us women were among the victors of Grenada, that women were there during the bombing of Libya and the invasion of Panama. When were their voices raised in shame and outrage over the bombing of unarmed mental patients, baby girls, old aunties and the upwards of 2,000 in the outlaw act Bush called "Just Cause"?

And now the TV shows fleeing civilians and retreating soldiers slaughtered in the most massive bombing campaign in world history, and we call it a "war."

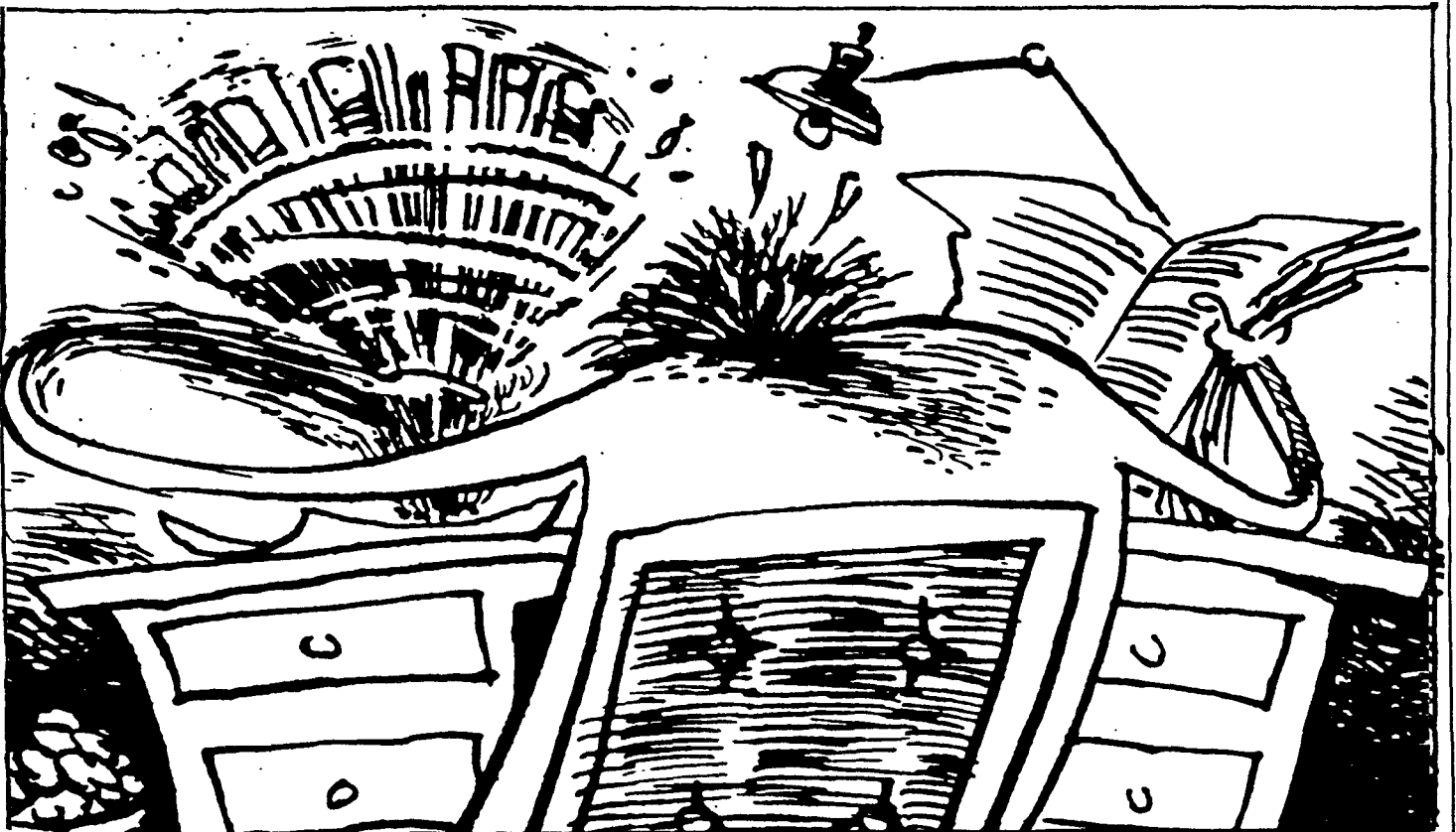
Are feminists supposed to support our sisters' right to equal-opportunity participation in the maiming and killing of other women's children so that their own might continue to exist on the bottom rungs of capitalism's bloody, bleeding ladder?

Almost all U.S. wars have been fought against people of color. And when you come marching into my "Third World" country or neighborhood as soldier (or cop), you are there to protect the wealth and maintain the power of any country's elite.

Rachel McCord  
Santa Rosa, Calif.

## Multiculturalism

WHILE I NO LONGER AGREE WITH MUCH OF WHAT I read in *In These Times*, I have remained a subscriber since the magazine began because of articles like Salim Muwak-



kil's on multiculturalism in the universities (*ITT*, May 1). I would, however, like to correct one inaccuracy in an otherwise highly informative and fascinating piece. The National Association of Scholars, on whose California board of directors I sit, is not opposed to black studies. On the contrary, in its official statements of principles the NAS explicitly endorses ethnic-studies programs and courses.

What concerns many of us is the extent to which the courses given and scholarship produced by many of these programs reflect a readily identifiable political orientation—which, by definition, is incompatible with the principle of intellectual diversity that is required for any first-rate academic program. I am also troubled by the extent to which all or most ethnic-studies departments appear either unable or unwilling to hire faculty who are not of the same race or ethnic background as the title of the department. In the old days, that used to be called discrimination.

David Vogel  
Berkeley, Calif.

between movement and intellectuals is repeated on countless occasions throughout the left, although with consequences usually less severe than the *Telos* fiasco.

The basic principal is that we have too few institutions where organized constituencies can conduct serious intellectual discussion. As a result, we will doubtless hear of other *Telos* stories of journals and intellectuals whose ideas turn out to have led us nowhere. The trend will continue because too many left intellectuals have created personal fiefdoms rather than institutions of democratic participation and popular involvement. In this regard, we have learned almost nothing from that part of our New Left past and the women's movement that believed democracy and accountability begin at home.

Jonathan Feldman  
Washington, D.C.

## Interracial couples

MY WIFE AND I FACED THE SAME KIND OF REACTIONS as Mike Tidwell (*ITT*, May 8) when we informed our families (white and black respectively) and friends that we were planning to marry. Many of them had little or no experience of racially mixed couples, either in life or (more important) in the media. Not surprisingly, they anticipated that we'd encounter unspecified difficulties and they expressed genuine concern for our future welfare. There was no way to alleviate these concerns except by going ahead with our relationship and making it

work—which is not easy, of course, no matter how similar or different a couple is.

My wife and I are just celebrating our 17th anniversary. We have two thriving children, and our relations with our own and each other's families are as good as any of our friends'—better than most. Over the years, we have occasionally met with curious, even (rarely) suspicious stares, but no significant hostility. Our lives by now are typically middle class: two careers, a Volvo station wagon, kids playing soccer, PTA, etc. Many would consider this downright boring. That impression is fine with us.

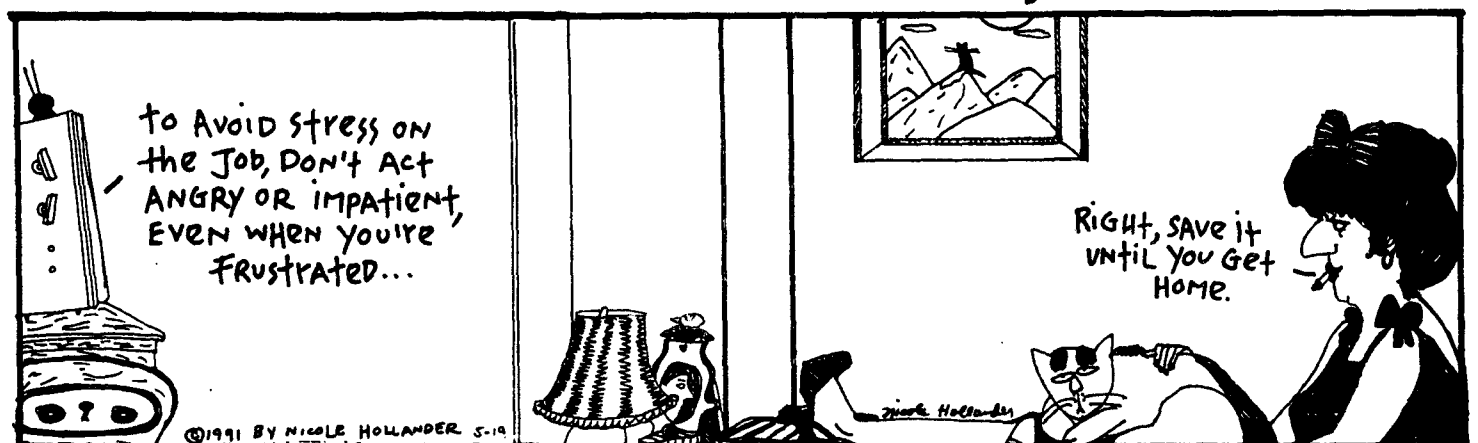
But our lives are only visible to a miniscule number of Americans. Until we begin seeing mixed couples drinking beer or reaching out to touch one another, not to mention having normal romantic relationships in the movies or on TV, the vast majority will continue to react like Tidwell's family and friends.

So it's best to understand their concerns but not let them deter you. And if you can demonstrate in your lives the normality of interracial relationships, you will do your part to help change people's reactions. Every little bit helps.

Michael Gagarin  
Austin, Texas

**Editor's note:** Please keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

by Nicole Hollander



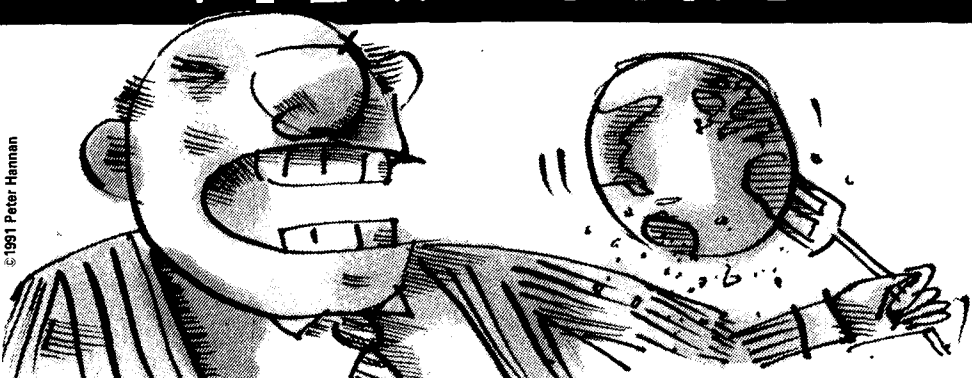


By Stefan Lindgren

The following is the text of a speech given at an international conference on human rights, "Vilnius-Leningrad-90," in Leningrad last year.

**F**OLKET I BILD/KULTURFRONT IS AN INDEPENDENT, non-party organization with a biweekly journal carrying the same name. Our program has three points: support for a peoples' culture, anti-imperialism, and defense of freedom of speech and the press. Our second slogan in the '70s was the basis for widespread action against the U.S. aggression in Vietnam; in the '80s it was against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia. And the third slogan has been interpreted as obliging us not to accept any kind of state subsidies. Based on Swedish historical experience, we think that not only negative intervention such as censorship but also so-called "positive" intervention in the press, in the form of subsidies, is contrary to the ideal of a free and independent press.

Both from an anti-imperialist and a democratic point of view, our organization takes a deep interest in the process now going on in the Soviet Union and all Eastern Europe. Let me just remind you that the Russian Revolution in 1917 was a final impetus to Sweden's rulers to accept the popular demand of the general right to vote, the only way to avoid a Swedish revolution. And this time, the outcome of perestroika and the democratic changes in Eastern Europe, too, will have an impact on Sweden.



## Of human and social rights and the freedom from want

But influences cross the Baltic Sea in two directions. "The Swedish way" and Scandinavian social democracy have for some time been an argument—and, to some debaters, an example—for Soviet reformers. Many foreigners who come to Sweden find its social security, its health care, its schools, judiciary system and regulated labor market impressive. Of course, I could draw another, more gloomy picture of a country where the great monopolies have concentrated more wealth in their hands than anywhere else except Switzerland. Sweden is, no question about it, an advanced capitalist country with a very competitive export industry and with a huge investment stake abroad.

Compared to some other Western countries, the behavior of Swedish capital—at least in Sweden—has to some extent been regulated and restricted. The unemployment rate (around 2 percent) is lower than the employers would like it to be. The taxes on industrialists are, on the whole, higher than in most countries in Europe. Inequality of income and wealth is growing but still lagging behind the rest of Europe.

But does this have anything to do with human rights? In a way it does. If you take a look at the Swedish Constitution of 1975, you will certainly find a lot of non-obliging promises of social equity. But, remarkably, Sweden's parliament has not included the "right of possession" in the constitution. Private property has no substantial constitutional guarantees. This "right," solemnly mentioned in most Western constitutions and in the United Nations charter, is simply not regarded as a human right by the Swedish Constitution.

In this case, you could say that the majority of the Swedish political establishment, the Social Democrats but also a part of the bourgeoisie parties, has been following the more radical tradition of the French Revolution.

**The French Revolution:** In 1789, the "property right" was considered inviolable. Freedom, property, safety and resistance against repression were the four main principles. In 1793, possession rights were explicitly restricted in order to safeguard the non-property-owning citizens' human rights. The "right" to own slaves was at the same time abolished.

What is the first human right? Robespierre asked rhetorically in January 1792. He answered: "The right to exist." On other occasions he specified this as a right to work and a right for the sick, weak and poor to be supported—if necessary, on common, state account.

From a philosophical point of view, it is clear that all human, civic rights have to be restricted in order to be safeguarded. I cannot enjoy the wildest possible freedom of the press if there aren't restrictions against defamation of my fellow citizens.

But the peculiar thing with the "human right" of possession is that the more property one person accumulates, the bigger the restrictions on his fellow citizens' rights. As Jeremy Bentham noted, I can possess a piece of land only if I restrict my fellow citizens' freedom to take what is grown there. But in the case of freedom of speech, of the press, of belief and so on, my right does not automatically intrude on other citizens' rights. Freedom of belief cannot be accumulated at the expense of my fellow citizens. Property can.

It is interesting to see that the Jacobin line of thinking was passed on to later generations and sometimes appeared in a somewhat twisted form where you would least expect it.

On January 6, 1941, President Roosevelt made a famous speech on the "four human rights": the freedom of speech, the freedom of belief, the freedom from fear and the free-

### From a philosophical point of view, all human and civic rights must be limited to be safeguarded.

dom from want. The expression "freedom from want" was even mentioned in the so-called Atlantic Declaration made by Roosevelt and Winston Churchill in 1941, which to some extent became a pillar for the later Cold War. The expression was also included in the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights.

Freedom from want is nothing but Robespierre's "right to exist" or the social rights of the workers to organize and safeguard their interests, mentioned by Lech Walesa in a letter to this present conference. If one refers only to the human rights of the great French Revolution, one should remember that this wasn't "human" enough to allow strikes or workers' associations. One should also remember that in the American Bill of Rights of 1779 the right to own property takes a prominent place and its beautiful bill of human rights did not in the slightest way restrict the ownership of slaves. Again, we have different traditions regarding human rights.

**Property rights in Sweden:** The in-

teresting thing with Sweden is that even the right-wing parties and the employers' organizations seem to have reconciled to the fact that property right is not to be compared and mixed with real human rights.

Even the liberal Peoples Party of Sweden admitted, when the constitution project was debated in 1973, that "unrestricted freedom of business and property are impossible and would harm other people's freedom."

The liberals demanded that the right to property should be mentioned in the constitution as a "central value." But even that modest demand didn't get a majority in parliament. So the result was that our constitution, although it doesn't explicitly mention any human right to property, only states that property cannot be expropriated without compensation. However, this compensation can be very small and must not necessarily be paid in money, which leaves wide possibilities open.

I know that social rights sometimes in the past, not least in this country, have been pictured as contradictory to traditional human rights such as freedom of the press. Social demagoguery has been used as an apology for bureaucracy and despotism. This has not been my argument. The social rights in no way contradict human rights. How could "freedom to live" or "freedom from want" contradict the other, more specific rights such as freedom of speech? But it certainly can be contradicted by unrestricted property.

The peculiarities of the Swedish Constitution are not accidental but reflect many decades of organized work by trade unions and the workers' parties to reform Swedish capitalism. These achievements are not made once and for all. Time after time they are questioned by the opposite side, and recently there have been attempts by the economically powerful groups to stage a rollback of social rights. Some of them seek inspiration in what is happening in the East, where private property now is restored. Lately, a private public-relations company, associated with the employers, has published a new draft constitution in which property is given full guarantees. Such proposals, however, are not yet taken seriously by the public. Organized labor is still putting up a fight.

If you accept my argument, it will have important implications for all discussions of human rights. Every 24 hours, 35,000 people starve to death on this planet. They starve not because of lack of food. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has calculated that globally there is 10 percent overproduction of food. These thousands starve because of overconsumption and waste in the industrialized world, our world, and by the possessing stratas within the poor countries themselves.

So any discussion of human rights taking an exclusively European perspective is based on lies. If intellectuals in Europe, in the calm eye of the storm, achieve the widest rights for themselves and disregard the even more fundamental human rights trampled upon at the periphery in order to accumulate more riches in the industrialized world, they themselves become accomplices.

**Stefan Lindgren** is a Swedish journalist and chairman of the cultural organization Folket i Bild/Kulturfront.

### SUBSCRIBER SERVICE S

If applicable affix your mailing label here.

#### I AM:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **MOVING.**

NEW ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

If possible affix your mailing label to facilitate the change. If no label is available be sure to include both the new and OLD zip codes with the complete addresses. Please allow 4-6 weeks for the address change.

☐ **SUBSCRIBING.** Fill out your name and address above and we will have IN THESE TIMES with news and analysis you can't find anywhere else in your mailbox within 4-6 weeks. Check price and term below. **ASTNO**

☐ **RENEWING.** Do it now and keep IN THESE TIMES coming without interruption. Affix your mailing label above and we will renew your account to automatically extend when your current subscription expires. Check price and term below. **ARSTO**

☐ **SHOPPING.** Give an IN THESE TIMES gift subscription. It makes a perfect gift for friends, relatives, students or associates. Fill out your name and address above and name and address of recipient below. A handsome gift card will be sent. **XSTHO**

NAME OF RECIPIENT \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

### PRICE / TERM

- ☐ One year: \$34.95
- ☐ Six months: \$18.95
- ☐ Student/retired, One year: \$24.95
- ☐ Institutional, One year: \$59.00
- ☐ Payment enclosed
- ☐ Bill me later
- ☐ Charge my VISA/MC

ACCT. NO. \_\_\_\_\_

EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Above prices for U.S. residents only. Foreign orders add \$41.00 per year. Canadian orders add \$27.00 per year.

**In These Times Customer Service**  
1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054



## Teamsters elections sound hopeful note for a U.S. labor movement in decline

ROCHESTER, N.Y.—Twenty-one years ago, on April 28, 1970, President Nixon signed the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). With the act came a new federal agency under the umbrella of the Labor Department and an expectation among workers that at last safety and health standards in workplaces would be vigorously enforced.

I took part in a public memorial meeting in Rochester, N.Y., held in honor of the day and was able to tell the crowd in this headquarters of the famously non-union Kodak Corporation that since the passage of the act—as with the passage of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA), another creation of that time—the trend has been downhill from the high hopes of the Nixon years.

This is no irony. Nixon signed OSHA and EPA into law at a moment when public support for federal regulation was high. Soon came the corporate counterattack of the mid-'70s, and under Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan and Bush, such regulation has gotten progressively more lax. Rochester, like many towns, still sports yellow ribbons, looking a little bedraggled now, on front doors and on trees along suburban avenues. And I was able to remind the crowd that amid all these expressions of solicitude for American men and women in the Gulf, a fearful carnage was continuing on the homefront, with President Bush actively campaigning to deflect effort to lessen the toll.

In the 21 years since OSHA was passed, some 200,000 American workers have lost their lives on the job. Another 1.4 million have been permanently disabled in workplace accidents, and as many as 2 million have died from diseases incurred from workplace conditions. In the same period only some 20 employers have been prosecuted, and just one, a builder in South Dakota, has been sent to jail—for 45 days.

Throughout the '80s the casualty figures climbed, as business fought to preserve profit margins by increasing productivity through speed-ups and cutting corners on safety standards for workers. Repetitive-motion diseases are now particularly conspicuous among these rising figures, both among so-called "pink-collar workers" in the computer-dominated service sector and among workers in Detroit.

Last year the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) tried to bring new legislation before Congress designed to beef up the 1970 safety act by making it easier for workers to refuse hazardous labor without protection. Business and the Bush administration successfully beat back the attempt.

Over the past few years employers, having already reduced wages, also have gone after workers' medical benefits in contract negotiations, demanding worker co-payments, higher insurance deductibles, decreased coverage or a combination of these.

As OCAW has pointed out, workers at hazardous sites get it coming and going, since they also tend to live in areas of high environmental risk from toxic dumping, air pollution, contaminated groundwater and the like. The air is always dirtier on the poorer side of town.

In Dearborn, Mich., in late April, unionists

## ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

gathered to debate strategies and assess the prospects for labor organizing in the '90s. The conference was convened by *Labor Notes*, the excellent monthly published in Detroit. During the three-day session, we got a series of snapshots of the concerns of shop-floor activists.

Workers from Detroit, Los Angeles and New York state auto factories, from Northern California canning plants, from Southern textile mills and from hospitals and other health-care facilities throughout the country were present. So were substantial contingents from the New Directions movement, the reform caucus within the United Automobile Workers (UAW); from the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, a similar caucus within the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT); and from Black Workers for Justice, an umbrella organization of black unionists working mainly to assist organizing in the South.

The three hottest topics of the conference all pointed to the dilemmas of labor: organizing in an uncompromisingly hostile environment nationally; confronting the new "free market" zone, which has been dropping tariff barriers on both the northern and southern borders of the United States; and the prospects of dislodging entrenched, unimaginative and often corrupt union leadership.

On the last point there was considerable excitement, since by the end of the year the Teamsters will hold its first direct elections for leadership of the 1.6 million membership in 88 years.

In the opening session, a black woman named Ina Mae Best told the 1,000 people in the hall just how hard things were in the Goldtex textile factory in North Carolina, where she'd worked for 18 years until she was fired a year ago for union organizing (see *In These Times*, May 1).

Best and her Southern brothers and sisters explained that they had made the journey to Dearborn in search of solidarity. There are 49 million industrial workers in the South, they explained, as against 28 million in the Northeast and 39 million in the

**Employers, having already reduced wages, have gone after workers' medical benefits, demanding worker co-payments, higher insurance deductibles and decreased coverage.**

Midwest. The strategic opportunity urged by Best and the others was for inter-regional support: the North/South gap had to be bridged, with the help of community coalitions.

The second major conference topic was the impact of the move toward a North American free-trade zone, running from Canada through the U.S. to Mexico. Canadian delegates mustered in Dearborn related the bleak consequences of the free-trade agreement between Canada and the U.S. Since it was instituted in the late '80s,

some 250,000 jobs have been lost in Canada, mostly from the industrial heartland of Ontario. Along with the jobs, many of the protections that have distinguished the Canadian work environment from its U.S. counterpart are now threatened. These include unemployment insurance, public-health programs and kindred social-democratic safeguards.

Mexican delegates, echoing their Canadian colleagues' sentiments, described the

**The response to this assault on labor, as stressed during a recent conference in Dearborn, Mich., is unionism without borders, an enormously difficult strategy.**

"free-trade market" from their station at the bottom of the wage pyramid. Agricultural jobs in Northern California that used to bring in \$7 an hour now pay just \$6 a day in Irapuato. And Mexico's maquiladoras, the foreign-owned border factories, offer an average wage of just \$1.15 an hour.

A delegate from UAW Local 879 in St. Paul, Minn. (which more than any other local in the country has embarked on an effort to coordinate union activity north and south of the border), pointed out that U.S. firms save \$60,000 a year in wages and benefits for every \$12-an-hour job they move to Mexico paying \$1 an hour.

The response to this assault on labor, as the Dearborn conference stressed, is unionism without borders, an enormously difficult strategy not only because of the divisive powers of capital but also because of the hidebound and unimaginative reflexes of the old-time union leadership. However

innovative the ideas voiced in Dearborn that weekend, however creative a particular local might be, one was always aware that against these thousand left unionists in Dearborn are legions of powerful, privileged union officers facing firmly backwards into the past.

Here is where the Teamsters elections sound a hopeful note. For years, the IBT, the biggest union in the U.S., has been bedeviled by straightforward criminals looting its pension funds and entering sweetheart contracts with employers and sweetheart alliances with anti-union politicians. But next December, under the supervision of the U.S. Justice Department, a mail-in referendum will be held for the union leadership.

There are ironies here. Many delegates were not particularly pleased with a notoriously anti-labor Justice Department dictating the union's business. Even the TDU opposed such a takeover. It's quite possible, however, that these unwanted direct elections—unthinkable without federal intervention—will propel Ron Carey, a reform candidate endorsed by TDU, into the union's top post (see *In These Times*, Feb. 27).

Carey, originally a package-car driver for United Parcel Service, has promised to purge corrupt Teamsters officials (154 of whom make over \$100,000 a year) and to institutionalize direct elections beyond the December referendum. As president of Teamsters Local 804 in New York City, Carey's politics have been liberal, and he has been enormously popular in his local—the source of his strength against the international leadership. He has selected Diane Kilmury as his running mate, a woman recently off the shop floor who told the Dearborn crowd that, in a macho union such as the IBT, Carey's selection had been an act of courage.

Carey's candidacy—and his plausible chances—buoyed the delegates at Dearborn. If a reform candidate could gain the IBT presidency and install democratic processes within it, then maybe there would be hope of turning around the U.S. labor movement.

Distributed by Alexander Cockburn

### The Center for Popular Economics

presents two institutes for activists, organizers, and educators who want basic training in progressive economic analysis to make their work more effective:

**International Institute  
August 4-7**

**Smith College, Northampton, MA**

This new Institute provides an indepth analysis of the dynamics and contradictions of the emerging global economy.

#### Topics include:

- The International Debt Crisis ■ The U.S. as a Debtor Nation
- Women in the International Economy ■ Protectionism and Trade
- The Transformation of Eastern Europe ■ The Economics of the Environmental Crisis ■ Multinationals and International Production Strategies ■ Understanding the International Financial System: Should U.S. Progressives Care?

#### NO PREVIOUS ECONOMICS TRAINING NECESSARY

Sliding scale fees • Scholarships, on-site daycare available • People of color encouraged to apply

APPLICATION DEADLINE JULY 19th

Write to: The Center for Popular Economics Box 785T, Amherst, MA 01004

**The Summer Institute  
August 4-10**

**Smith College, Northampton, MA**

Our Annual Institute covers a broad array of economic issues using class, race, and gender analysis.

#### Topics for the week include:

- The Economics of the Housing Crisis ■ The Economics of the Persian Gulf War and Beyond ■ The U.S. as a Debtor Nation
- Plant Closures and Runaway Shops ■ The Economics of the Environmental Crisis ■ Democratizing the U.S. Financial System
- The Economics of Drugs ■ The International Debt Crisis
- Bushanomics

- The International Debt Crisis ■ The U.S. as a Debtor Nation
- Women in the International Economy ■ Protectionism & Trade
- and much more...

- The Economics of the Housing Crisis ■ The Economics of the Persian Gulf War and Beyond ■ The U.S. as a Debtor Nation
- and much more...



## Hank: The Life of Charles Bukowski

By Neeli Cherkovski

Random House, 352 pp., \$21.95

By Jason Rubis

**C**HARLES BUKOWSKI IS ONE OF those writers. Some worship him as the literary equivalent of Marlon Brando; others see him as being about on the level of bread mold—a sexist,

## BIOGRAPHY

violence-mongering glorifier of some of the lowest forms of life Spaceship Earth has yet produced. Bukowski claims no love for either camp, and neither has affected the way he does business. A recently released collection of the latest Bukowskian anti-heroes (*Septuagenarian Stew*) and the success of two films based on his work (*Barfly* and the lesser-known *Love Is a Dog from Hell*) make it clear that the man is holding fast to his typewriter and his wine bottle. Love him or hate him, he's not going anywhere.

And love him or hate him, the man has one of the most distinctive voices to emerge in the last 30 years of American literature. That voice speaks of more than just drunks and horse racing, as some would have it. What Bukowski has given us is his entire life, with names changed to protect the guilty—from the youth portrayed in *Ham on Rye* to the successful later years in *Hollywood* and all the stories and poems and novels in between.

Often sordid, occasionally sad, never less than brutally honest about himself and those around him, Bukowski's work provides a hard look at an America rarely seen in the better-groomed fiction of his contemporaries. Through the eyes of his alter ego Henry Chinaski, Bukowski examines bars, factories, warehouses, liquor, classical music, world literature and even the puzzling upper classes. All of this in a deceptively simple style that confounds both academic and avant-garde.

A biography of Bukowski has long been overdue and awaited with equal parts anticipation and dread by those who feared a ball-breaking tome of obscurantist theorizing by a self-styled literary "subversive." Now someone named Neeli Cherkovski has stepped from the shadows to put our minds to rest. *Hank: The Life of Charles Bukowski* is a graceful, readable examination of the man and his myth by One Who Knew Him.

**Avoiding obvious traps:** A poet himself, one who collaborated with Bukowski on the editing of several let's-kick-the-establishment-in-the-ass literary magazines in the '60s (one called *Laugh Literary and Man the Humping Guns*), Cherkovski's previous credits include a biography

# A gold mine of anecdotes for Charles Bukowski fans



Michael Montfort

of Lawrence Ferlinghetti and a collection of personal/critical appraisals of other poets, *Whitman's Wild Children*. For the most part, Cherkovski avoids the obvious trap of going on and on about "Bukowski and me" (except in the skippable "personal memoir" that forms the book's

epilogue). Nor does he (for the most part) load the book with tiresome critical evaluations of Bukowski's work.

Bukowski's life, naturally enough, has been one rich in stories. Cherkovski tells them—or rather, lets them tell themselves—in semi-fictional form, complete with dialogue.

Anyone who loves Bukowski anecdotes will find *Hank* a gold mine. There is the story, for instance, of how Bukowski, arriving in Germany for a reading tour, was harassed by custom officials demanding to know the subject of a reel of films he had packed. Bukowski snapped back, in

English, "None of your fucking business!" Unable to understand him, the guards asked for a translation, which was promptly provided.

*Hank* moves from Bukowski's miserable childhood to his adolescent battles with his distant (and, in his father's case, abusive) parents, to his wanderings from rooming house to rooming house, drinking and writing stories that, at the time, no one wanted to buy. We follow Bukowski to his gradual recognition by the '60s small-press scene and his gradual emergence as a cult figure in the '70s and '80s.

We see Bukowski not only as a writer but as a lover, husband, father and friend. He emerges fiercely independent and cynical, as expected, but also gentle and loyal in a way that may surprise those who know him only as the eternal tough guy.

The best place for the uninitiated to begin exploring the Bukowski mystique is, of course, any of his books (or, if you have world and time enough to seek them out, *Bukowski Reads His Poetry* and *Hostage*, two spoken-word albums guaranteed to convert the heathen). But *Hank* will satisfy the curious and provide plenty of grist for those who just can't get enough.

The years to come will undoubtedly see other Bukowski bios, but *Hank* is likely to remain the "standard life." In its unpretentiousness and brevity, it calls to mind the best aspects of Bukowski's own writing and illuminates a man who bids fair as any to be remembered as the quintessential American writer. **Jason Rubis** is a writer living in Washington, D.C.

## Isabel Out of the Rain

By Catherine Gammon

Mercury House, 199 pp., \$18.95

By Eleanor J. Bader

**T**O READ CATHERINE GAMMON'S *Isabel out of the Rain* is to enter the world of the manipulated and the manipulating, the hustled and the hustler. It

## FICTION

is tense, seedy, creepy stuff, the habitat of the homeless and near-homeless, a land of Vietnam vets both drunk and sober, young rootless girls, incest survivors, murderers and angry souls searching for connections and a way to make sense of the madness and chaos.

There is Billy Santana, a genius-maybe-saint, who seems to arrive in time to ameliorate every conceivable crisis while sharing so little of himself one wonders if he is real or an apparition. There's Russell, a one-time warrior turned passive and isolated, who eventually admits that "all his life he has been numb." Cheyenne, Russell's kid brother, a skinny, vio-

# Creeping and crawling from the wreckage

lent, alcoholic would-be recluse looking for an undefined something or someone to heal the enormous hurts that rule his existence, is also part of the scene. And, of course, there's Isabel, the waif-turned-woman around whom much of the novel revolves.

Gammon's writing is intense and spare, evoking a dreamlike state that carries the reader into a trance of sorts. I had to read it slowly, a few pages at a time, in order to absorb the complex situations and emotions presented. Some of it reads like poetry; other areas of the book ring loudly with political truths and interesting ideas. Take Santana's rumination on his time in Vietnam. "The napalm and the booby traps and the land mines are the will of man, but the mountains and the jungle are realities willed by God. It's God we're making war on."

Gammon also gets into the soul

of the abused child, as Cheyenne, in a particularly lucid moment, recalls his upbringing—the horror and the joy. It is Santana he remembers most fondly, "Santana who took him out of his world when he was a boy, away from his mother, who took him to the zoo and to see the buffalo in Golden Gate Park, who took him to ballgames and movies, who did magic with cards and pulled dimes from his ears, who told him fairy

**Novelist Catherine Gammon's writing is intense and spare, evoking a dreamlike state that carries the reader into a trance of sorts.**

tales and ghost stories and stories about children he had known in Vietnam—Santana who had helped him with his mother one night when they came in from Tilden Park and pizza on Telegraph Avenue and found her on the living-room floor and had to clean her up—his mother in the bathroom naked, old, worn-out flesh, Santana helping her into the shower and scrubbing her down."

*Isabel Out of the Rain* is a difficult, sometimes unpleasant book. I did not like the people, the world I was brought into or the feelings that erupted as I slogged through it. I had nightmares inspired by Gammon's prose. Yet, it has stayed with me. Not a day in the last several weeks has been without some thought of Santana, Russell, Cheyenne or Isabel.

In short, Gammon made me care in a day-in-day-out sort of way. And again, it is Santana's words that reverberate. "In Guatemala," he tells his friends, "they say that God blinds those who do not love." It is a rejoinder to hold dear as we navigate the hopelessness and despair that so often threaten to reign.

**Eleanor J. Bader** is a writer living in Brooklyn.



## Cracking the Canadian Formula: The Making of the Energy and Chemical Workers Union

By Wayne Roberts  
Between the Lines Press  
(3-394 Euclid St., Toronto, Ontario)  
311 pp., \$21.95 (Canadian)

By Doug Smith

**A**FTER A WHILE, READING LABOR history is a little like eating liver and spinach—you know it is probably good for you, but it is often so predictable. Labor history seems to come in about five different flavors: there's how the bureaucrats snuffed the life out of the rank and file, there's how the liberals and social democrats destroyed the union by kicking out the Communists, there's the story of the battles between the industrial and craft unions, there's the saga of the beset-upon workers and the rapacious bosses, and there's the story of the new social historians—who apparently feel they are doing contemporary issues if they bring their work past 1919.

These are real stories that need telling, but after you've read one or two in each genre, I suspect the average reader is likely to take a pass when the next take on the subject comes around. In the case of *Cracking the Canadian Formula*, that would be a big mistake. This book, about a relatively small, relatively unknown Canadian union, should set a new standard for labor histories. Despite the fact that Roberts holds a doctorate in labor history, he has managed to write a union book that will be read with pleasure and interest by members of the Energy

## Labor saga that doesn't revert to type

and Chemical Workers (ECW). At the same time, he has written a book that offers fresh perspectives on many long-running political debates in Canadian labor history.

**Many breakthroughs:** The book is in many ways a biography of Neil Reimer, the man who headed the Oil Workers International Union (which later became the Oil and Chemical Workers Union and subsequently left the international in 1980 to become the ECW) from 1954 to 1984. During that period, the union achieved numerous breakthroughs in national bargaining, in health and safety and in workplace democracy.

As portrayed by Roberts, Reimer is one of the last of the builders of industrial unionism in Canada; the son of Mennonite immigrants to the Canadian prairie, he was raised with a strong ethic of social responsibility. It was this ethic that he brought to the labor movement. "I told our members many times that if all they want from me is help in collective bargaining, I'm not interested. That's removing the movement aspect of labor unions. A movement of what? A movement of getting more money?"

While there is plenty in this book for those who like their labor history from the bottom up, it is a book that dares to go where few labor histories have gone before and examines the role of leadership. Too often labor histories assess labor leaders by their political correctness, without examining the strategies and tactics they employ—and need to adopt in the face of changing conditions.

For example, the ECW recognized that many workers resent the seniority system since it often shuts them off from better-paid and more interesting jobs. As a result, the union negotiated contracts where workers are paid according to their skill levels—not the jobs they are doing. According to Roberts, Reimer recognized union meetings for what they were—boring—and realized that unions have to attract and retain the loyalty of members by engaging in debate in how work is organized

rather than merely negotiating the same sorts of contracts unions have been negotiating for the past 50 years.

**User-friendly:** But this book's special merit comes from its writing and organization. In his introduction, Roberts says he was interested in creating a book for labor activists—a book that could be put on fast-forward and dipped into wherever the reader opened. He has succeeded to a remarkable degree: each of the sections in the book can be read on its own, while the book has an overall

flow that is only occasionally marred by this organizational approach.

The fact that Roberts loves a good story and knows how to tell one doesn't hurt either. The book is rich in character and characterization; one Scottish-born mineworker and

## WORK

labor leader is described as a proponent of the "big bang" theory of labor organization. He loved to come to town, rally the troops with a fiery speech and lead them into battle against the company. Roberts notes that while this was ideal for the battles of the '30s, it was totally inappropriate for a union trying to organize refinery workers in the '50s. At another point, Roberts describes the Canadian Labour Congress as "the most revolutionary labor central in the world."

The book was commissioned by the union, but Roberts (who has spent much of his career as an academic, unionist and journalist crossing swords with union leaders) claims he enjoyed complete editorial freedom to write a "warts and all" history. I sort of hope that the people who built the ECW have a few more warts in real life than Roberts reveals, but this is definitely an unsanitized book. If one of Roberts' central arguments is that contemporary industrial unions do not all have to operate in the same hidebound fashion, this book also proves that labor histories do not have to be written in the same leatherbound fashion. Which means he has succeeded in cracking the Canadian formula for labor history.

**Doug Smith** is a Winnipeg journalist and broadcaster.



## C.L.R. James buffs keep game going

By William E. Cain

**T**HE CARIBBEAN WRITER, SCHOLAR, political theorist and activist C.L.R. James (1901-89) was one of the major intellectuals of the 20th century, but his stimulating, diverse body of work remains undervalued and too little known. Many readers are familiar

## RACE

with *The Black Jacobins* (1938), his definitive account of the Haitian revolution, and others have come across his insightful meditation on the game of cricket, *Beyond a Boundary* (1963). But most of James' wide-ranging texts are either out of

**James' stimulating, diverse work remains too little known.**

print or difficult, if not impossible, to locate in bookstores.

Two organizations have been formed to promote the study of James' writings and make them more accessible. The first is the C.L.R. James Society, which began publication of *The C.L.R. James Journal* a year ago and which sponsored an international conference last month at Wellesley College on James' life and legacies. The second, under the directorship of Jim Murray, is the C.L.R. James Institute in New York City.

Murray's special concern is to call attention to the vast amount of material by James that has not been published. The James archive includes many letters, essays, autobiographical notes, lectures and, most important of all, a 330-page manuscript titled "The Struggle for Happiness," an extraordinary study of American literature, culture and politics that James wrote in 1950.

At the time of his death, James was readying "The Struggle for Happiness" for publication, and he was also helping to prepare an anthology, edited by Anna Grimshaw, of

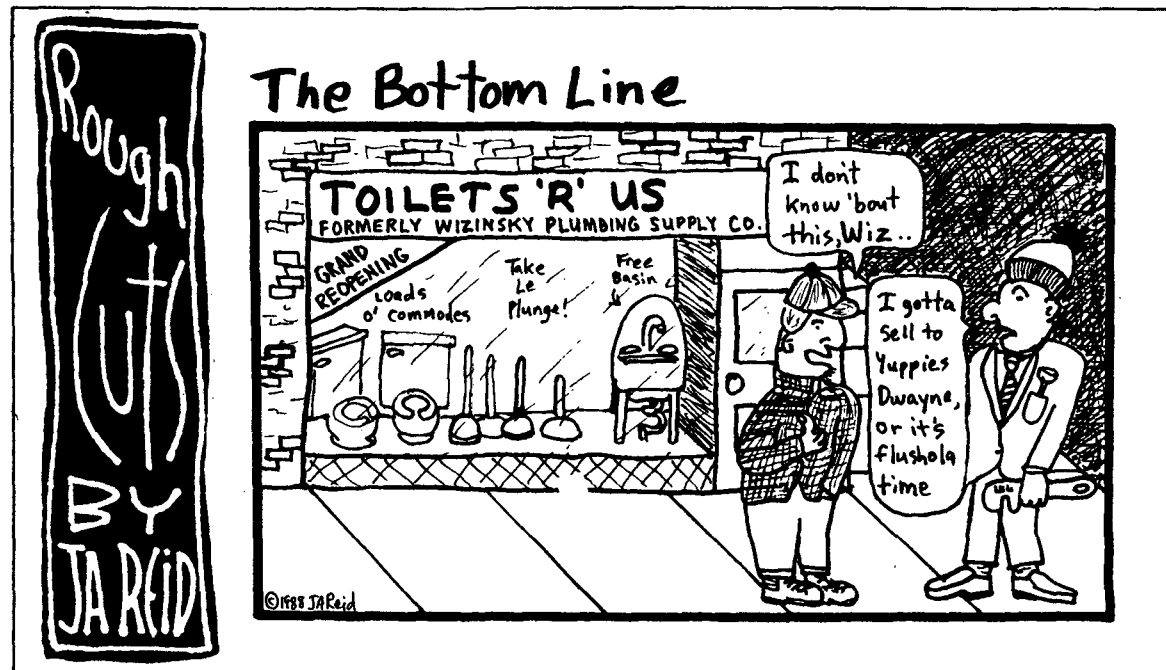
his published and unpublished writings that was to be titled "The C.L.R. James Reader." As a result of unfortunate disputes with James' literary executor, these books, though completed, have not yet appeared in print.

As partial compensation, the James Institute has issued four pam-

phlets that provide valuable descriptions of the unpublished material and locate it in the context of James' years in America and intellectual and political interests and activities. The most illuminating of these is *The C.L.R. James Archive: A Reader's Guide*, Anna Grimshaw's 100-page annotated bibliography of the material that the archive contains. But those interested in James will benefit greatly from the other three pamphlets as well. One makes available Grimshaw's preface and introduc-

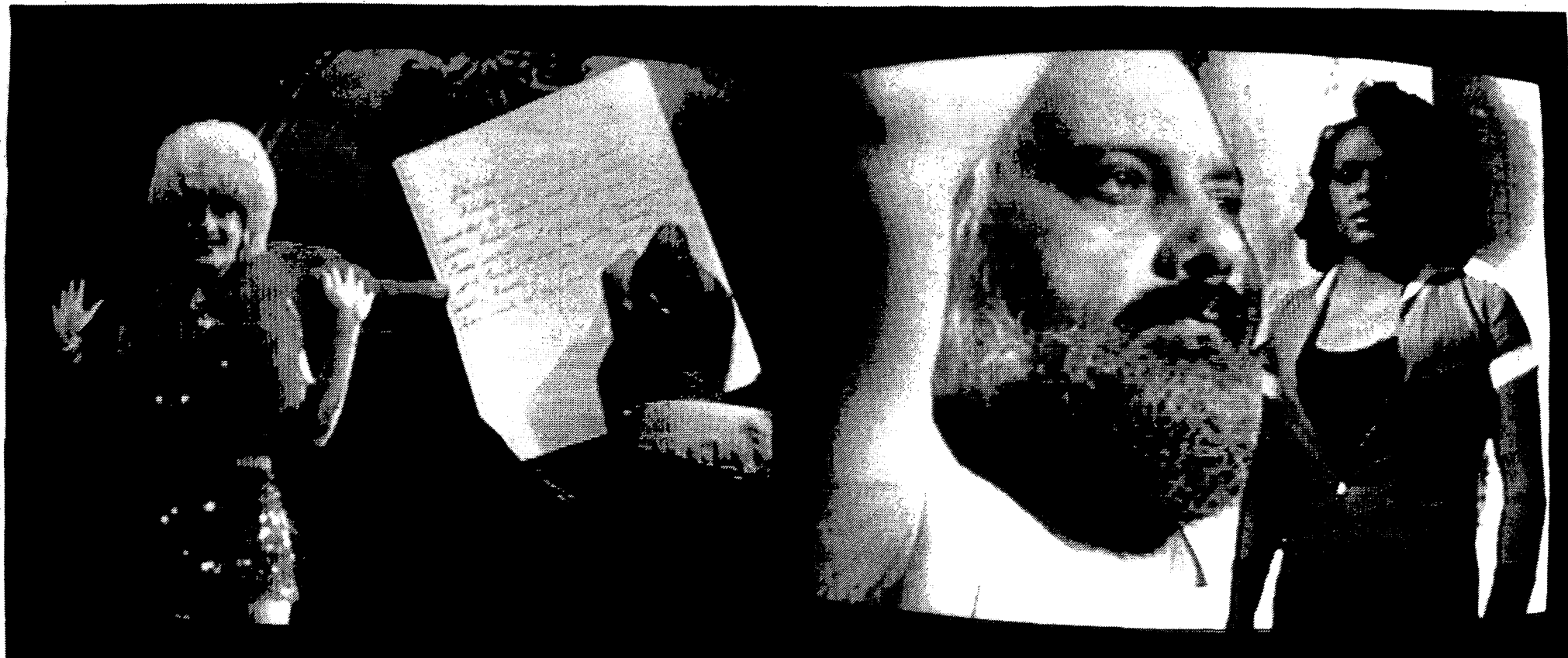
tion to "The C.L.R. James Reader"; another is her expert survey of James' writings from 1950 to 1963; and the third, co-authored with Keith Hart, is her detailed summary of "The Struggle for Happiness."

For information about the pamphlets, contact Jim Murray, C.L.R. James Institute, 505 West End Ave., New York, NY 10024. To become a member of the C.L.R. James Society, write Bill Cain, English Department, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA 02181.





Marx: The Video by Laura Kipnis/photo by Bill Stamets



A chorus of drag queens are part of Laura Kipnis' unconventional interpretation of Karl Marx's life and work.

By Bill Stamets

**L**AST JUNE, A PORTLY, UNASSUMING professor stepped into the chair at a Chicago hair salon and handed over a picture of Karl Marx. "I want to look like him," he instructed his hair cutter. She took a quick look and went to work on his gray mane and beard. The longhair from Northwestern University, Chuck Kleinhans, had a gut feeling that his youthful barber had no clue who Karl Marx was—and could care less why her customer that day would want to resemble him.

Kleinhans already looks a lot like the late political philosopher. Sometimes he even sounds like him in the seminars he teaches in modern culture and Marxist theory. But in *Marx: The Video*, his task is to stand in (and lie down) as a mute model for his unfashionable look-alike. More like Harpo Marx in a coma. Often bedridden and outfitted in a billowing nightshirt, Kleinhans is the key prop in the latest project of Chicago video artist Laura Kipnis.

Kipnis turns Karl Marx over in his grave and digs up the hidden meaning of his carbuncles. It seems that the brains behind communism was tortured by a skin affliction. Ever since his mother died, and during the writing of *Das Kapital*, the rotund thinker endured nasty boils that he detailed in 30 years of letters to his collaborator Friedrich Engels. ("This second Frankenstein on my hump is not so fierce as the first.")

**Nasty eruptions:** Armed with feminist theory and free-form comedy, Kipnis exhumes Marx's weighty corpse and corpus to pursue analogies between his physical body, the body of his philosophy and the body politic. In the 19th century, Europe erupted with violent upheavals, but

## Carbuncles-and-all portrait of body politic in *Marx: The Video*

history failed to unfold in Marx's lifetime as his theory promised. So, Kipnis suggests, Marx's body hysterically mirrored the revolutions that misfired around him and erupted into vicious sores. In the video, styled like a postmodern lecture, a comely trio of drag queens (the Marx Sisters?) rub in the point with a chorus of "His body just erupted!"

Communicating the unexpected comes easily to Kipnis. Raised in Chicago, she dropped out of high school and got into art school in San Francisco, where she experimented with slide projectors and audio tapes. She once created an unspeakably confrontational artwork (she'd rather not go into details) that appalled visiting critic Yvonne Rainer, the famous avant-garde feminist. In a gesture of redemption, Rainer guided the young artist to the Whitney Museum's studio program, where Kipnis first encountered the New York video art scene. She was never drawn to video for video's sake; it just worked better for her as a tool of communication.

Kipnis bills *Marx: The Video* as "an appropriation of the aesthetics of both late capitalism and early

Soviet cinema (MTV meets Eisenstein) to reconstruct a Marx for the video age." She is deeply immersed in theory, yet is equally devoted to reaching audiences via entertainment. She subscribes to both *The*

### VIDEO

*New York Review of Books* and *TV Guide*. She has taught college courses in soap-opera production, authored an analysis of *Hustler* magazine and lectured from Glasgow to Havana.

**Use protection:** An earlier video, *Ecstasy Unlimited: The Interpenetrations of Sex and Capital* (1985), argued that the consciousness industry turned sexual liberation into a new opiate of the masses. Although packaged with comic touches, this tape was pretty didactic, concluding with a long "Bibliography." With more plot and less dogma, *A Man's Woman* (1987) succeeds as a straightforward story of a news reporter investigating the assassination of a right-wing anti-feminist. In this video, Kipnis wanted to uncover why women like Phyllis Schlafly appealed to other women. Similarly, instead

of damning Madonna, Kipnis would rather study the apparatus of her popularity. And then appropriate it.

Next on Kipnis' agenda is a feature film aiming for a wider, theatrical distribution. Backed by the producers of *My Beautiful Launderette*, she says it will be a conventionally designed movie about a movie director and his sway over women. Kipnis complains that "boring labor documentaries are the substance of left culture, which is starved for entertaining left media."

In 1974, before Kleinhans became a Marxist in the flesh for Kipnis, he founded *Jump Cut*, a journal taking a Marxist angle on modern culture—movies, music and TV. These days, he notices how younger intellectuals are drawn to video as an outlet for propagating their views. His point was demonstrated by a lecture—illustrated by video clips, of course—at the Chicago premiere of *Marx: The Video*. Video professor Vanalyne Green presented "The Illustrated Essay" on the history of feminist video and the politics of popular styles.

Chairwoman of the video area at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Green's latest tape, *A Spy in the House that Ruth Built*, embodies a deconstructionist agenda like Kipnis'. Instead of Karl's corpus, it's the Babe's game she eyeballs. In this remarkable diary, both intellectual and sensual, Green has a feminist's field day playing with metaphors in the erotic cosmos she spies at the ballpark. Green, like Kipnis, makes

video art that is smart, funny, serious and uncommonly watchable.

**Certain radicalism:** Classifying her own work as "propagandistic," Green said, "I feel very certain about what's wrong with the world and want to do something about it. With modernism, it was radical for the artist to be uncertain. Now, certainty is radical."

Both Kipnis and Green employ a gamut of popular formats to reach viewers beyond the gallery and the academy. In light of the left's damning critiques of Hollywood and TV—often appearing in *Jump Cut*—some questions arise. Is MTV-style packaging best because it works? Or is it suspect as a reactionary vehicle, no matter how radical its artistic cargo? Carbuncles aside, did Marxism lack a human face? Could Madonna teach Marx anything about skin care? Is politics now cosmetics?

Kipnis told her Chicago audience that the idea for *Marx: The Video* was born in boredom while watching *The Last Temptation of Christ*. In the middle of Martin Scorsese's movie, she wondered if Christ had read history correctly. If Jesus couldn't, could anyone? Did Marx, witness and theorist of the working class, read his own times correctly? The challenge faces theorists of our own culture. In one tape Green screened, *Joan Does Dynasty*, professor Joan Braderman does "stand-up theory" as she delivers a brilliantly rude critique of this TV series starring Joan Collins. "Although I've got the intellectual tools to deconstruct its odious subtext," Braderman concludes, "does deconstructing it merely end up as inventing a new way to love it?" In the era of colorization, neither her hairdresser nor Marx's barber can be certain. ■

**Bill Stamets** is a writer and filmmaker living in Chicago.



By Bill Peterson

THE WORLD IS A LITTLE BIT LESS of a rockin' place today. Keith Richards crystallizes the point when he insists to Mick Jagger that the Rolling Stones ought to stick together and "grow this music up" as they plunge into their fifties. It sounds depressingly like rock'n'roll's last hope and dying gasp. Listen for Chuck Berry's shuffle pattern, the very basis of this music, and it's seldom to be found today except in some novel tune by a spandex metal band about "rock and roll." These references are irritating, because the kids just aren't playing it anymore. Rock'n'roll is becoming an old man's music. The last young man to die for it went down three weeks ago.

Johnny Thunders, father of the punk-rock guitar and one of Berry's last influential progenies, was found dead in a hotel room in New Orleans on April 23. He was 38. Authorities suspect a drug overdose, which, given Johnny's addictive history, makes sense without a single clue. It so happens a syringe was found in his toilet. Friends say Thunders tried moving from New York to New Orleans to break his pattern of drug dependency. So sad about Johnny, and so typical. All the places one might go to beat the monkey off his back and he picks New Orleans?

Thunders was the embodiment of all those desires to self-discover and self-destruct that grip the teenaged and once made rock a genuine cathartic thrill. Thunders gave voice to the sex drive, cheap thrills, misogyny, crude jokes, insults, low life, vandalism and a guitar sound that scared the hell out of most people. Truly an adolescent's man, he expressed a triumphant, but by no means righteous, mocking of established values, flavored richly with more than a hint of irresponsibility. One did not listen to Thunders in anticipation of a better world to come. His world was one of eternal recurrence, of amoral integrity, if not sagacity.

**Call me irresponsible:** Though he frequently packed houses in Europe and Japan, where audiences who can't get enough about Marilyn and Elvis or any other American pop icon correctly perceived him as American rock'n'roll's living specter, Thunders never made it so big in the States because he was just a little too true to rock'n'roll's reckless imperatives. He couldn't be depended upon to show up at a given place at a given time in any kind of condition to perform. Not that his music was inaccessible, but he proved time after time to be unmanageable.

It was, after all, rock's original sin that Elvis stopped doing "Hound Dog" and postured himself, at the whip of his management, as a multimedia pop idol in a string of cheesy films, ruining his credibility with right-thinking rock fans. The kids first embraced rock'n'roll because they liked a music they could throw into the establishment's face. John-



## Lightning strikes Johnny Thunders

ny, unlike most other Americans, never stopped being that kid. Johnny had no intention of growing this music up.

As Thunders emerged in the early '70s, rock showed signs of vapid complacency, dousing the kids with formula schlock about feelings and horses with no name. This guitar wizard with the New York Dolls, Thunders became something of a rock'n'roll Jesus, at once living and dying for the music's sins. Johnny came into my life as a personal

savior in 1974, because his metal-shredding guitar work revealed itself as my musical refuge and inspiration to renounce a troubled family life, an insipid peer-regulated junior-high society and the dopey ethos of the tired Midwestern farm town where I grew up, not to mention the listless offerings of the radio. Thousands of others with backgrounds that were wildly diverse and more or less similar had the same experience with Thunders, and it was his band, the Dolls, with a polite nod to The

Stooges, that provided inspiration to the punk movement, if it can be called a movement.

The punks, their rhetoric to the contrary, proved no less susceptible to the herd instinct than any other music lifestylers, and, as the '80s took hold, punk fell to an offshoot of the very manifestation of herd morality Nietzsche warned against. These neo-Nazi skinhead punks deplored hierarchical structures of any kind, except, in an alarming number of cases, on grounds of race and ethnicity. After a while, the music scene was so proletarian and democratic that you couldn't tell the rock stars from the rock fans. Everybody wore black from head to toe, ostensibly as an expression of individuality, but it was really another kind of conformity.

Thoroughly embraced by the blackened, unwashed crowds, Thunders never truly joined them. He continued to posture himself as every bit the rock star, a star by self-definition, no matter what that meant. A hit-and-miss performer, Thunders could slog along limply for hours before tearing off-key into two- and three-minute surges of slipping and grinding rock mastery that could make the whole time worthwhile. Thunders and the audience always knew they were going to have to wait it out for truly memorable rewards.

He continued to play in the mold of '50s Berry, '60s Richards and '70s Thunders, with the exception of a few hilariously light-weight offerings that could be passed off either as some heroin-related toxic psychosis or a misguided urge to settle down. Johnny began to show these signs in recent years, his shows delving too heavily into doo-wop, girl-group standards and Leslie Gore covers. It would have gone over big in Las Vegas.

**Classic set:** But in late November last year, Thunders reunited at the Marquis in New York with, quite arguably, his greatest band, The Heartbreakers, and played a rock show for the ages. After years of attending Thunders shows in which this drug-dazed legend was more drug-dazed than legendary, he put together the show I had been waiting for, blitzing through the litany of classics such as "Personality Crisis," "Too Much Junkie Business," "Can't Keep My Eyes On You," "Chinese Rocks," and too many others to mention.

It was the last I ever saw of Johnny, and it was, mercifully, the best. As I've grown older and passed through a few more stages of life, Johnny's example has illuminated countless situations, if not always in the most mature manner. I've never been able to entirely figure out why, unless it's just that I've never been willing or able to relinquish the optimism and excitement his guitar sound brought me when I really needed a reason to look ahead. Perhaps it's because I'm endlessly mystified that such a nihilistic figure is the source of such inspiration in my life. The puzzle is never solved.

I can't figure out if Johnny is a

comic hero or a tragic one. I often have found him to be both at the same time. For pure entertainment value, you couldn't top Thunders at his most laughably pathetic. I always spotted a good bit of Dean Martin in his stage persona, a fashionably wasted stage demon who gave us a choice between laughing and crying at our inebriated selves. Once Thunders was to appear at a record store and sign autographs. Classically, he showed up, late, vomited on the front steps and passed out. Nobody was disappointed.

As often as Johnny took methadone treatments and tried to kick his various chemical dependencies, he seemed willfully bent on death as the outcome and resume of his life. It was as if he had a goal to die a little bit every day and, while he was younger, this brought him to some impressive moments of creativity. But it also created a legend to which he was to fall victim. In Nina Antonia's Thunders biography *In Cold Blood*, she tells of a night he stepped on stage and said, "Okay, you got it, I'm gonna die tonight. I'm gonna die up here." The audience cheered.

**Johnny, we hardly knew ya:**

There have been nights when Thunders was so drunk on stage he couldn't tune his guitar. He'd bring a woman on stage and dance with her, not like a ditzzy Springsteen in his "Dancing in the Dark" video, but so bombed and disinterested that Thunders and his mate would trip and fall over his stage monitor. Sometimes there were fights with the audience. Johnny would insult the audience. The audience would insult him back. The audience was never safe. Neither was Johnny.

Johnny never offered any apologies for his erratic behaviour, and none were expected. He was one of the few in this world who walked his talk, even though, in his case, that might not be much of an accolade. He once said, in his highest moral tone, "I don't advocate drugs for anyone else, only for myself." He was comic, because the audience admired the very man it laughed at, a performer the audience felt above but also a hero because he did not pretend to one set of values while living another, an individual who reminded the audience that to not be such, to live by the usual normative standards without originality or creativity, was a lunacy all its own. But the audience also suffered with Thunders through its admiration, though Thunders, tragically and perhaps shamelessly, seemed in an offhanded way to not regard this as suffering at all.

The comic tragedy of Johnny's life is over now, but he is, to me, immortal and unforgettable. Fortunately, the records remain to sound the guitar, beckon the memory and evoke the attitude, but they seem just a little less real with his passing. The show is over. I loved Johnny dearly, and I'll miss him. I suppose, though, that's part of growing up. ■

Bill Peterson is a writer living in Cincinnati.

IN THESE TIMES MAY 22-28, 1991 21



# Race and candor

Continued from page 13

rowly targeted to minorities does not automatically make one a racist. The white Americans I have in mind are those who could be potential members in a progressive political coalition to fight inequality, especially if the coalition's policy agenda would reflect not only the important concerns and interests of racial minorities but the real interests and concerns of these non-minorities as well."

Wilson's argument is tactical as well as strategic: not only do race-specific programs needlessly alienate potential coalition partners but they are ineffective as well. "Neither the policies based on the principle of equality of individual opportunity nor policies that call for preferential group treatment, such as affirmative action, will do much for less-advantaged blacks because of the combined effects of past discrimination and current structural changes in the economy," Wilson contends. "Now, more than ever, we need broader solutions than those we have used in the past."

Wilson's critics argue that his race-neutral approach actually is a costly concession to white America's antipathy for affirmative-action policies. With so many race-specific problems afflicting African-Americans, they argue, it seems illogical to disregard race in attempting to address those problems.

A recently released National Academy of Sciences report, titled *A Common Destiny: Blacks and American Society*, seemingly hammers that point home. The report concludes that "significant discrimination against blacks is still a feature of American society" and

"barring unforeseen events or policy changes, the future status of black Americans will continue to stagnate and decline, with tragic consequences for blacks and for American society." By de-emphasizing the racial aspect of black Americans' plight, Wilson is accused of helping this country postpone yet again the inevitable confrontation with the legacy of its racist history. Wilson, however, is more concerned with providing resources to the disadvantaged than with achieving some abstract sense of social justice.

But as Afrocentricists argue, African-Americans are in greater need of cultural reassurance, having been socialized in a culture that routinely devalued their humanity. Because of this unique debilitation, blacks are driven to develop cultural connections to ancestral sources of identity that can offset society's Eurocentric prejudices.

Inflamed and energized by politicians' crass exploitation of the race issue, Americans have become rigidly polarized into competing camps. One side, the majority, disagrees with the values embodied by affirmative action or multicultural education, and the other, beleaguered and outnumbered, clings tightly to ideas of pluralism and cultural empowerment. The new candor and the old fears have provoked a debate that obscures the issues and creates needless racial antagonisms.

"There never has been greater disagreement about whether past discrimination entitles blacks to preference in education or hiring," wrote *Newsweek* in its recent story. "An overwhelming majority of whites in *Newsweek's* poll say 'no' to continued preference; most blacks say 'yes.'"

Clearly, that kind of polarization leaves little room for pluralism. □

## C A L E N D A R

### MEDFORD, MA

June 3-8

The Eighth Annual Management and Community Development Institute will take place June 3-8, 1991, at Tufts University in Medford, Mass. Choose from 47 intensive courses on affordable housing, community economic development, nonprofit management, organizing and professional skills. Courses are taught by accomplished practitioners and are designed for staff of community-based organizations. Call for a catalogue at (617) 381-3549. M&CD Institute, Lincoln Filene Center, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155.

thors of *For the Common Good*. Also: Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson and progressive development writer Rob Kennedy. Sponsored by the Madison Institute. Topics: "Beyond conventional economics and misplaced concreteness," "Economics and ecology," "A new social economy based on the individual-in-community," "The new economics and new age and traditional religious beliefs" and "Are ecological and social reform linked?" \$35 registration, \$15 students. Send to: The Eco-Conference, 731 State St. Mall, Madison, WI 53703. Phone: Vern Visick, (608) 257-1039.

### SARASOTA SPRINGS, NY

August 9-16

The International Women's Writing Guild presents "WRITING & HIGHER VALUES II," the 14th Annual IWWG Summer Conference 1991, at Skidmore College. Although this seven-day conference is the largest in the U.S., the personal attention and quality of support offered is unsurpassed in empowering the talents and skills of women writers. This annual conference offers rewards and enrichments that have literally changed the lives of past attendees. Nearly 50 workshops are featured exploring a wide range of topics from fiction, non-fiction, poetry, feature writing and publishing. Many topics also explore the writer's inner journey as well as personal expression. Several guest speakers are featured. The conference is open to all women, regardless of professional portfolio, and attendees need not be members of IWWG. For further information on the IWWG and for conference registration, please contact Hannelore Hahn, c/o IWWG, P.O. Box 810, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028, (212) 737-7536.

### NORTHAMPTON, MA

August 11-17

The Center for Popular Economics will hold its 12th annual Summer Institute—a six-day residential program designed for social-change activists, organizers and educators. A three-day Institute on the International Economy will be held for the first time. No economics background is necessary. Analysis is from perspectives of class, race and gender. Fees are on a sliding scale and scholarships are available. Free childcare is provided. For more information, contact Center for Popular Economics, Box 785, Amherst, MA 01004, (413) 545-0743.

### TUCSON, AZ

June 6-9

16th National Conference on Men & Masculinity focuses on "Discovering New Paths: Men Together, Healing the Earth." Sponsored by the National Organization for Men Against Sexism and the Tucson Men's Cooperative. Keynote speakers include Don Conway-Long, Mark Thompson of the *Advocate* and Harry Brod of Kenyon College. Over 100 workshops will be presented in topics ranging from Pro-Feminism, Gay Affirmative, Mytho-Poetic, Personal Growth, Political Action and Multi-Cultural. Cultural entertainment highlights include Michael Kerns, Romanovsky & Phillips, Geof Morgan, Anne Feeney and Carlos Nakai. For registration information, please call 1-800-487-6616 or write to M&M 16, P.O. Box 41286, Tucson, AZ 85717.

### NEW PALTZ, NY

June 14-16

1991 Quaker Peace Institute. We will explore spiritual and practical dimensions of moving toward a world without war: launching a peace offensive. Speakers, workshops, plenaries, music, worship, childcare. At State University of New York. Cost: \$110; \$85 seniors/students. For registration/information, call Dan Wade, (914) 255-1485, or Nancy First, (914) 666-3524.

### MADISON, WI

June 21-22

Forging a New Economics: A Public Conversation about Markets, Environment, Community and Human Life with Herman Daly and John Cobb, co-au-

## How and Why the American News Media Are Distorting Current Events—

### Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media

by Martin A. Lee and Norman Solomon

"Unreliable Sources gives a rundown of some of the most important news stories you didn't hear about over the past decade...stories that were effectively made unavailable to the average citizen.

"Today, when the media are as big a part of the story as the story itself, you're not truly informed unless you're up on the media as well. This book is an excellent place to start." —from the Foreword by Edward Asner

"A worthy addition to the library of any student of American news media, social structure and political science." —*Washington Post*

"An invaluable service to those convinced that an uncritical approach to the media is more hazardous than it is comfortable." —*Pat Aufderheide, In These Times*

"Committed, eloquent writing that plumbs the psychological and political complexities of mass-mediated experience." —*San Francisco Chronicle*

"An essential text." —*Utne Reader*

"A much-needed consumer's guide for people who find the standard news detached from the events and issues that reflect their needs."

—Ben Bagdikian, author of *The Media Monopoly*

Martin A. Lee is the publisher of *Extra!*, the journal of FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting) and author of *Acid Dreams: The CIA, LSD and the Sixties Rebellion*. Norman Solomon, a FAIR advisory board member, is co-author of *Killing Our Own: The Disaster of America's Experience with Atomic Radiation*.

Hardcover, 320 pages. Illustrated with news photos, headlines and captions. Only \$19.95.

© Carol Publishing Group/A Lyle Stuart Book

To order by Visa or MasterCard, call 1-800-447-BOOK or fill out and return the coupon below.

Please send me your book *Unreliable Sources*. I enclose \$19.95, plus \$3 shipping and handling. (N.J. residents add \$1.40 sales tax).

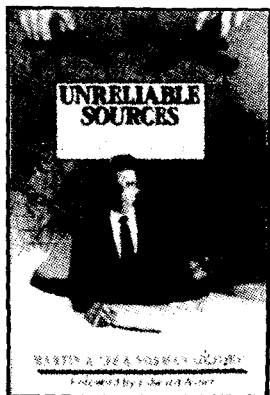
Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Clip this coupon and mail with your payment to:

© Carol Publishing Group, Dept. IN, 120 Enterprise Avenue, Secaucus, NJ 07094



## "There's no denying that this book is fun."

James C. Clark, *Newspaper Research Journal*

"...I loved it."

Virginia Postrel, *Reason*

"A fascinating look at the media."

Malcolm S. Forbes, Jr., *Forbes*

"Crisp fascinating essays..."

*MediaGuide* is the stuff of a hundred dinner conversations for news junkies."

David Brooks,

*The Wall Street Journal*

"...fascinating reading, an irresistible blend of fact and opinion."

G.R. Graf, *Choice*

"...indispensable and addictive."

Brad Miner,

*National Review*

"A treasure chest of behind-the-scenes insights, bon mots and informed analysis on major publications and the journalists who work on them."

Keith J. Kelly,

*Magazine Week*

"I give it ★★★★★"

Dan Barnett,

*Off the Record*

"Anyone even remotely interested in the state of the nation's Fourth Estate will find this fat book marvelous."

Herb Schmetz,

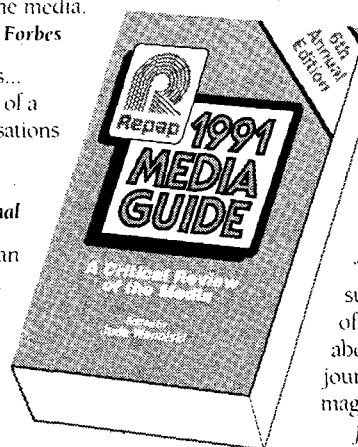
*The Sacramento Union*

"Briskly self-confident but not supercilious...provocative and often penetrating comments about many of the nation's top journalists, papers and magazines."

James D. Atwater,

*The New York Times*

Book Review



## Find out why.

Call 1-800-MEDIA-88  
ask for EXT. 205

### INTRODUCTORY OFFER

Order the 1991 *MediaGuide* for \$32.95 (\$29.95 + \$3 shipping) and we'll send you the 1990 *MediaGuide* absolutely FREE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Charge ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard Card# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Payable to Polyconomics Inc.)

MAIL TO: Polyconomics Inc., 86 Maple Ave., Morristown, N.J. 07960

40% Discount



## HELP WANTED

**UNION SEEKS NEWSPAPER EDITOR.** Responsibilities include photography, writing, editing and layout of newspaper, leaflets, press releases and other publications. Knowledge of McIntosh and desktop publishing a plus. Send resume and references to John Ziv, UFCW Local 342-50, 166 E. Jericho Turnpike, Mineola, NY 11501.

**NEWS EDITOR.** Available in May. Coordinate and edit the work of staff and volunteer reporters covering local, national and international events of importance to the lesbian and gay community. Write news stories as necessary. Participate in layout and production of paper. Qualifications: Strong writing and editing skills, ability to work with deadlines, knowledge of lesbian and gay issues. Deadline: June 1, 1991. All GCN positions require commitment to lesbian/gay liberation, feminism, anti-racism, an awareness of class issues and collective decisionmaking. Salary/benefits: All positions pay \$215/week and include health/life insurance through Harvard Community Health Plan, sick leave and four weeks paid vacation. GCN offers staff members responsibility for their own jobs, with flexibility and ample room for innovation. Please send resume and cover letter to: GCN Job Search Committee, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

**COMMUNITY JOBS,** socially responsible job opportunities. Subscribe to the only monthly nationwide listing covering peace & justice, civil rights, unions, consumer advocacy, organizing, social work and more. \$25/one year. Send checks payable to ACCESS: Networking in the Public Interest, 50 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108, (617) 720-5627.

House in the Wood Summer Camp seeks **COUNSELORS** to teach five daily activities in one of the following special areas: canoeing, swimming, nature or cooperative games. Back up counselor with daily living activities of eight 7-12 year-olds. Other programming required. Openings for general cabin counselors also available. Experience with groups of children and within specialty areas required. Waterfront positions require Red Cross certification. Season: June 15-August 17, optional to Aug. 30 for additional

## C L A S S I F I E D S

pay. Salary: \$950 plus bonus room and board. 8-day staff training, Red Cross certification classes. Contact: Val Wright, Director, 3300-1 Bay Road, Delevan, WI 53115, (414) 728-2752.

**ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR**—Manage small, busy research office; help institution grow. Intelligence, excellent organizational skills, computer skills, 5 years experience (in non-profit preferred). \$28,000-\$35,000, benefits competitive; EEO employer. Resume to: Heidi Hartmann, Director, Institute for Women's Policy Research, 1400 20th St., NW, Suite 104, Washington, DC 20036.

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZER.** New Jersey Citizen Action seeks experienced, self-starting organizer to work with coalition affiliates and members for progressive taxation. Start immediately, benefits, low-to-mid 20s based on experience. Send resume to: NJCA, 400 Main St., Hackensack, NJ 07601, Attn: Peter.

### PUBLICATIONS

**QUEERS!** Gay Community News—For nearly two decades, GCN has been a national forum for lesbian and gay life and liberation. GCN provides the kind of probing, insightful news, analysis and entertainment coverage that makes it "the source for up-to-date weekly coverage of lesbian and gay politics and culture nationwide." (Richard Burns, Director, New York Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center). With articles ranging from queers in the military to television's first gay cartoon kiss, there's always something for everyone, every week! 1 year, \$39; 6 months, \$25; or for a sample copy, send \$2 (to cover shipping and handling) to: GCN Subscriptions, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

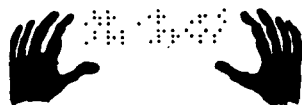
**NEWSLETTER** against adoption abuses, secrecy. Feminist, progressive. \$2 for sample to: J. Baer, Box 8081, Berkeley, CA 94707.

**CASA NICARAGUENSE DE ESPANOL**  
*All Nicaragua is a school!*  
A SPANISH LANGUAGE, POLITICAL & CULTURAL STUDY CENTER IN MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

- Live with a Nicaraguan family
- Meet with representatives from government institutions and mass organizations
- Visit cooperatives, community projects and attend cultural events
- Year-round sessions

For more information send S.A.S.E. to:  
**CNE**, P.O. Box 15062  
San Diego, CA 92115  
(619) 583-5163

**The Our Right to Know**  
**Braille Press, Inc.**



For blind and print-handicapped persons, selected articles from IN THESE TIMES are included in FREEDOM IDEAS INTERNATIONAL (FI), a quarterly review of minority and independent Left publications, produced by the Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc., on 4-track 15/16 ips cassette tape. A 4-issue subscription to FI costs \$5. Send to: Our Right To Know Braille Press, Inc., 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217, (313) 842-1804.

**ALTERNATIVE PRESS INDEX: TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE.** API is an invaluable tool for your study of social change. 250 alternative & radical publications indexed. Ask the folks at your library to subscribe. \$125/institutions, \$30/individuals. Write Alternative Press Center, P.O. Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218 for more information.

**1990-91 DIRECTORY OF ALTERNATIVE & RADICAL PUBLICATIONS.** Over 300 periodicals listed, \$3.00. Write: Alternative Press Center, P.O. Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218.

**BERTHA CAPEN REYNOLDS SOCIETY.** Organization of progressive social workers and human-service workers. For information on membership, newsletter and June 14-16 fifth annual institute/conference at Smith in Northampton, MA, write: B.C.R.S., P.O. Box 20563, New York, NY 10023.

**WANT AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE PEACE CORPS?** Just published, *The Peace Corps and More: 114 Ways to Work, Study, and Travel in the Third World*. \$8.50 ppd. Global Exchange, 2141 Mission St., #202-A, San Francisco, CA 94110.

### BOOKS

**"ANARCHIST COOKBOOK"**—Available again! \$22, postpaid. Barricade Books, Box 1401-J, Secaucus, NJ 07096.

**A VISION OF WAR.** Col. Robert G. Ingersoll's eloquent, humanistic anti-war oration. A masterpiece of its kind. Reprinted from the original illustrated 1899 edition. Paper, \$4 ppd. Independent Publications, Box 102, Dept. A, Ridgefield, NJ 07657.

**FREETHOUGHT VERSUS RELIGION.** A concise, engrossing, scrupulously re-

searched historical examination of Theism, from primitive to modern times, that rips through the sham and pretense of sectarian hypocrisy. A contemporary masterpiece! Softcover, \$9 ppd. Independent Publications, Box 102, Dept. A, Ridgefield, NJ 07757.

**NO CANDY, NO FLOWERS** by Carl Shapiro. Award-winning 1984 novel about the liberated lifestyles of columnists who work for a Manhattan-based national magazine. This provocative and meaningful novel prompted a *New York Times* writer to call the author "a writer people love to steal from." Softcover, 158 pp., \$8.50 ppd. Independent Publications, Box 102, Dept. A, Ridgefield, NJ 07657.

**MANHATTAN RHAPSODY** by Carl Shapiro. Intriguing, award-winning 1985 novelette about romance and shady ethics among musicians, composers and arrangers in the Big Apple, with a heart-palpitating windup. Softcover, 100 pp., \$6 ppd. Independent Publications, Box 102, Dept. A, Ridgefield, NJ 07657.

**THE STATTERED DREAM** by Alexander Szurek. Translated from the Polish. Primary historical material about Eastern Europe, its leaders and the Spanish Civil War (Hemingway's Spain). 389 pp. Hardcover only. \$30 ppd. Grunblatt, P.O. Box 25, North Creek, NY 12853-0025.

### PERSONALS

**NATIONWIDE SINGLES PHOTO MAGAZINE.** Send name, address, age. Send no money. Exchange, 1817 Welton, #1580-BA, Denver, CO 80202.

**SINGLES SHARING VALUES** on peace, ecology, spirituality and personal growth connect AT THE GATE. Free details. Box 09506-ITT, Columbus, OH 43209.

**CONCERNED SINGLES NEWSLETTER** links compatible, socially conscious singles who care about peace, justice, racial equity, and the environment. National and international membership. All ages. Since 1984. Free sample: Box 555-T, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International.  
Call toll-free 800-521-3044. Or mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

## SPANISH PROGRAMS

**NICARAGUA STILL NEEDS YOU!** Live, work with Nicaraguan families on a work brigade in July. Nicaragua Center for Community Action, 2140 Shattuck, Box 2063, Berkeley, CA 94704, (415) 428-2146.

**STUDY SPANISH IN GUATEMALA**, (505) 242-3194.

**MEXICO.** Spanish, Culture, Tours. Escuela Azteca: summer in Cuernavaca. Live with a Mexican family. Study with Professor Ross Gandy (*Marx and History, Mexican Revolution*). Spanish all levels, visual aids. Aztecs, Mayas, Juarez, Mexican Revolution. Tours of pyramids, revolutionary murals. \$190 for each two weeks. For brochure, write or call: Escuela Azteca, Apdo. Postal 76-005, Mexico, D.F. C.P. 04201. (73) 15-24-69.

### TRAVEL

**JET TO EUROPE!** \$160 from the East Coast, \$269 from West Coast, (\$229 elsewhere—provided seats are available). AIRHITCH®, (212) 864-2000.

**TEACHERS—others:** Travel Mexico, Costa Rica cheaply. Free information: EDUCATORS TRAVEL ADVISORY, P.O. Box 5553, Montecito, CA 93150.

### HEALTH & FITNESS

**LO-IMPACT AEROBICS** at Sylvia's Super Saturday/Sweet Saturday Fitness Classes starting May 11 at Puezh Studios on Broadway. Veteran teacher with African dance background. Call now to register. Sylvia Ewing, (312) 478-3549.

**MENTAL ILLNESS DRUGS** cause permanent neurological damage. Psychiatry and the pharmaceutical industry do not want you to know about Tardive Dyskinesia and Tardive Dystonia, a public health crisis that affects over 1 1/2 million people. Please write: Ira Gruber, Tardive Dyskinesia Association, 1206 E. Pike St., Seattle, WA 98122.

### JEWISH CURRENTS

May 1991 Issue

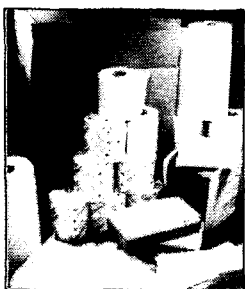
"Revitalizing Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process," editorial; "Palestine 1939," Abbie Lipschutz; "Arab-American Poetry," Adam B. Schonbrun; "Jewish Liberation Theology," Annette T. Rubinstein; "Sholem Aleichem's Last Years," B.Z. Goldberg.

Single issue: \$2 plus 65¢ postage.  
Subscription: \$20 yearly (USA).

### JEWISH CURRENTS

Dept. T, Suite 601  
22 E. 17 Street  
New York, NY 10003

## 100% RECYCLED PAPER!



### The Perfect Gift!

Our **HOME PACK** contains:  
375 napkins 50 envelopes  
200 facial tissues 8 rolls toilet paper  
50 sheets writing/ 4 rolls paper towels  
typing paper 1 note pad  
Only \$24.95 (+ \$4 shipping & handling)  
**FREE CATALOG 800-323-2811**  
VISA/MC accepted

**Atlantic Recycled Paper Co.**

P.O. Box 39096 • Baltimore, MD 21212

## Good Sex is Safe Sex. Since 1987

The Reimer Foundation has organized the **FREE** distribution of over 200,000 condoms, produced posters, videos, cards, T.V. shows, and advertisements that embrace life...with protection. Get into rubbers! How can you help promote our most basic freedom? Write or call:

**The Reimer Foundation**  
606 W. Barry, #300  
Chicago, IL 60657  
1-312-935-SAFE

Donations gratefully accepted.

The Reimer Foundation is a non-profit corporation, dedicated to stopping AIDS now.

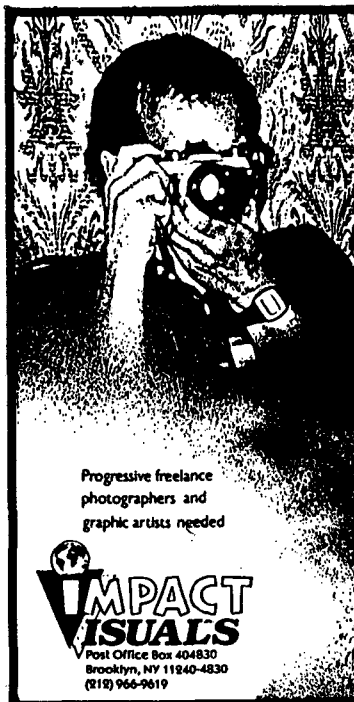


**THE REIMER FOUNDATION**

## FORMER MADISONIANS and others of the left ilk

Subscribe to the only radical biweekly providing news by and for people of color, women, environmentalists, Third World people, lesbians and gay men. Local, regional, national and international. \$15/year.

**THE MADISON INSURGENT**  
PO Box 704, Madison, WI 53701



Progressive freelance photographers and graphic artists needed

**IMPACT VISUALS**  
Post Office Box 404830  
Brooklyn, NY 11240-4830  
(212) 966-9619

## IN THESE TIMES Classified Ads Grab Attention

...and work like your own sales force. Your message will reach 128,000 responsive readers each week (89% made a mail-order purchase last year). ITT classies deliver a big response for a little cost.

### Word Rates:

95¢ per word 1 or 2 issues  
85¢ per word 3-5 issues  
80¢ per word 6-9 issues  
75¢ per word 10-19 issues  
65¢ per word 20 or more issues

### Display Inch Rates:

\$30 per inch 1 or 2 issues  
\$28 per inch 3-5 issues  
\$26 per inch 6-9 issues  
\$24 per inch 10-19 issues  
\$22 per inch 20 or more issues

All classified ads must be prepaid. Ad deadline is Friday, 12 days before the date of publication. All issues dated on Wednesday.

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ week(s).  
Please indicate desired heading \_\_\_\_\_  
Advertiser \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Send to: IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads, 2040 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL 60647.



# Off with his head

## Eco-illogical solutions and environmental correctness



By Joel Schechter

I asked a friend of mine in Greenpeace if she thought it would be ecologically correct to execute Saddam Hussein.

Alice replied that, as far as she knew, death by "natural causes" did not include execution or any form of capital punishment. "Why do you ask?" she wondered.

"Connecticut's senator, Joseph Lieberman, recently returned from Kuwait and said Hussein should be sentenced to death for his 'crimes against the environment.' I wondered how an environmentalist would react to his judgment."

"I can't speak for anyone else in Greenpeace," said Alice, "but if you ask me, Lieberman is setting a dangerous legal precedent. It could be the beginning of an international call for ecological justice."

"Would that be so dangerous?" I asked.

"It wouldn't be dangerous to you or me," answered Alice. "But the president of General Motors should worry. If Saddam is condemned for irresponsibly burning oil, what will Lieberman say about automobile manufacturers whose products also darken the sky with oil emissions?"

"Surely you're not comparing General Motors to Saddam Hussein?"

"Have you ever been on the L.A. freeway during rush hour in the middle of June?" asked Alice. "For that matter, have you ever tried to breathe in New Haven near the Q Bridge? If Sen. Lieberman wants to prosecute air polluters, he can find a few in his own city, hidden somewhere in the highway smog."

I began to understand what Alice meant by "ecological justice." The same standards would result in the arrest of incinerator operators who produce toxic ash around the state. They don't deserve death sentences yet, but a few weeks of compulsory community gardening might be in order.

Alice added, "Maybe a few nuclear-weapons manufacturers would benefit from 'preventive detention,' too. Only until they promise not to destroy the ecosphere, of course."

"And don't forget the individuals who made Saddam Hussein the environmental criminal he is today," she continued. "Those executives who supplied him with arms and chemicals to wage war and raised no objection to his militarism before last August. A few prominent Americans fall into that category."

"You wouldn't sentence them to death, too, would you?" I asked Alice.

"Not unless Sen. Lieberman approved. But I would enjoy hearing the president of General Motors called 'the Saddam Hussein of the Midwest.' I think that would be ecologically correct."

Joel Schechter teaches at the Yale School of Drama and edits the satirical newsletter *Immodest Proposals*.